Certain Aspects of the Church

JOHN COTTON SMITH, D.D.

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BRIAR-HILL LECTURES.

CERTAIN ASPECTS

OF

THE CHURCH

Ἀνθρωπος εἰς ἕνωσιν κατηρτίσμενος.
S. Ignat. Epist. ad Phil. Cap. V.

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BY

JOHN COTTON SMITH, D.D.

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TO THE

REV. REUBEN KIDNER, RECTOR.

AND TO THE

WARDENS AND VESTRYMEN

OF THE

Church of the Ascension,

IPSWICH, MASS.,

THIS VOLUME OF LECTURES IS

DEDICATED.

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PREFACE.

THE title "Briar-Hill Lectures" has been given to this volume because the lectures or sermons which it contains have been written, in the retirement of summer months, at "Briar Hill," in the town of Ipswich, Mass. Through the kindness of the rector and vestry of the parish in that place, the author has been able not only to witness but, to some extent, to co-operate in the work there done for the church. With grateful appreciation of this privilege, the volume is dedicated to the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of the Church of the Ascension, Ipswich, Mass.

CITY OF NEW YORK, ASCENSION RECTORY,
FESTIVAL OF ST. LUKE, Oct. 18, 1880.

CHARITY AND TRUTH.

PREACHED AT THE ORDINATION OF THE REV. J. I. T. COOLIDGE, D.D., APR. 14, 1859.

"CHARITY—rejoiceth in the truth."—1 Cor. 13 : 6.

THE circumstances of this occasion almost demand the consideration of the subject upon which I am to address you. The ordination which has called us together is the consummating act of a change in religious doctrines and ecclesiastical relations. And the change itself brings before the mind the melancholy truth that the Christian world is not one household, living together in unity of spirit and the bond of peace, but rather presents a hostile array of rival churches and sects, distracted by mutual jealousy and suspicion, and too often tearing and rending each other, instead of doing battle

with the common foe. This condition of things in Christendom presents a most important subject for our consideration, and suggests innumerable practical questions. The relations which persons calling themselves Christians sustain to each other press upon us the apparently rival claims of Charity and Truth. How to be faithful to both is the practical difficulty. We meet with such questions as these: what is the truth? how much of truth is fundamental? what is to be insisted upon as necessary, and what may be left as matter of opinion? how far does charity require us to go with those who differ from us? and what obstacles does a proper regard for the truth interpose in the way of what charity would seem to present as so desirable—unity of spirit and of organization among all who profess to be the followers of Christ?

I shall endeavor, by God's blessing, to lay down and illustrate some general principles by which such questions as these may perhaps be satisfactorily answered.

It is my earnest desire to be faithful both to Charity and Truth; and although I cannot hope

to meet the views of those with whom truth, whatever may be its relative importance, is the only consideration, or of those with whom the principle of charity is carried to extremes, I still trust that no essential truth may be compromised for the sake of charity, and that I shall not be held as an enemy to charity because I insist upon fundamental truth. My only desire is to do something to adjust, in our minds, the relations of the two.

As the first step in our inquiry, it would be well to bring before our minds the actual state of our community in this respect, so that we may ascertain what is the condition of things in regard to which the claims of Charity and Truth are to be made.

But there is no time on this occasion to do more than simply to notice the fact that there are certain tendencies, clearly apparent, in the various bodies of Christians into which this community is divided. These tendencies may, I think, be reduced to three—one toward rationalism, one toward superstition, and one consisting in a reaction from these extremes toward evangelical religion.

The state of speculative philosophy at the present day is such as greatly to accelerate these tendencies. Its effect must be to gather various religious schools into a few great classes, and to define the boundaries of these classes more sharply than ever before. The philosophical views of Sir William Hamilton, whether true or false, are destined, it seems to me, to affect very powerfully the great religious tendencies of the age. Sir William Hamilton's object was, as is well known, to determine the limits of human knowledge, and the result of his investigation is that we can know logically only the relative, the finite, the conditioned ; and that the absolute, the unconditioned, and the infinite are, strictly speaking, beyond the limits of human knowledge. Now, if this philosophy becomes prevalent, men will be compelled to choose between faith in a divine revelation and speculative atheism. Rationalism must become atheistic, if reason can give us only the relative and the finite, and those who are appalled at such a conclusion will be compelled to rely implicitly upon divine revelation for a knowledge of the infinite. Rea-

son will take its proper place in relation to faith, and Anselm's profound words will be recognized as containing the highest wisdom : " I do not know in order that I may believe, but believe in order that I may know."

A consideration of these tendencies, it seems to me, is sufficient to convince us that there are three centres around which the religious tendencies of the age are gradually gathering themselves, and that three great and distinctly defined classes will eventually absorb the endless diversity of religious opinions which now exists. Reason without faith will find its way to some system of philosophic atheism like that of Comte. Reason with faith, and in submission to it, will lead to some evangelical system—for faith must rest upon the Word of God, and there is no Protestant system not evangelical in which the Word of God has preserved its integrity. Faith without reason will work itself gradually into the superstition of the Church of Rome, since those superstitions which have most of authority will gradually attract those who are superstitiously inclined.

Upon this view of the present state and ten-

dencies of religious opinion among us, we are prepared to consider what elements there are for cordial sympathy and co-operation in the Christian bodies by which we are surrounded. There is, of course, in regard to all connected with them, and indeed to all mankind, the sacred duty of charity. We are under the most solemn obligations to entertain kindly feelings toward those who differ most widely from us. But what we wish to know is, whether we may not, without any compromise of the truth, come into closer connection with those who call themselves by the name of our Master. Our own Church has labored heretofore under the suspicion of being specially exclusive and uncharitable; and it becomes us to inquire whether we may not have appeared so, even where the interests of the truth imposed no obligation upon us; and whether we may not, therefore, have stood in the way of a closer union among Christ's people, even when that union required no compromise of the truth. Every one's duty in this respect is to be determined by what he considers as necessary or fundamental truth. And yet, in this very respect, there is danger of

a violation of charity; for why, it may be asked, should one Christian refuse fellowship with another whose learning and religious character are at least equal to his own? It will, I trust, be thought by those who do not hold evangelical views that the apparent want of charity in those who make these views fundamental is, at least in some degree, justified by the fact that they do not stand simply upon their own reason—which may not be any better than that of their opponents—nor simply upon their own interpretation of the Scriptures—which they will admit is fallible—but also upon the fact that these few fundamental points have stood forth prominently in all ages of Christianity—sometimes, indeed, with a dim radiance like that of a light-house glimmering at midnight upon a dark, tempestuous sea, but sometimes glowing like suns in the heavens. In taking our stand upon orthodox and evangelical views as fundamental, we are sustained not only by our own reason, not only by our interpretation of Scripture, but by the whole past of the Christian Church. It is, therefore, in no spirit of arrogance, in no want of the largest

charity, we trust, but in sincere humility, with a willingness to be led first of all by the Bible, and then by the voice of the Christian world in all ages, that we feel bound, in fidelity to the truth, to insist upon the great evangelical doctrines of redemption as fundamental in the Christian system.

And yet I think we may have been justly chargeable with a want of charity toward those who differ from these views, by failing to enter somewhat into their views of things, to ascertain the various steps by which they have arrived at their results, and to construe favorably certain statements which perhaps mean something to us very different from their original intent. And I think we may have erred greatly in charging certain consequences, which they expressly disown, upon the opinions of men—for this is one of the most glaring violations of charity. A system itself may properly be charged with any consequences with which we regard it as logically connected, but not the men by whom the system is held. They are to be judged by the views which they avow, not by those which they disown and reject.

I doubt also whether we have sufficiently considered those circumstances out of which the Unitarian movement, for with that we are now specially concerned, took its rise, and the peculiar aspect of Christianity to which it was opposed. At a time when Christian doctrine scarcely existed in New England, except in the most rigid Calvinistic form, there was a natural reaction, and as there were no ancient creeds or liturgy to limit this reaction, it soon assumed the form of Pelagianism of the most decided type, and was developed into the Unitarianism of New England. Now, it seems to me that every system is entitled to the benefit, if such it is, of being considered in reference to that to which it is opposed. I yield to no one in my admiration for that lofty and uncompromising piety which has been fostered under the sternest Calvinism; but I cannot wonder that when peaceful and prosperous days came to the early New England Christians, the hearts of some yearned for a faith of milder and more attractive features. The old Calvinism of our fathers was a faith which seems well suited to the hardships and privations of their lot. It invested

with such reality and life the covenant relation between God and the believer, and so concentrated, as it were, the whole compassion and love of God upon the little body of the faithful, that it is no wonder that they clung to it while want and suffering compelled them to wring from religion every consolation it could afford. This system, as it was held by our fathers, was like some of our own New England mountains in the midst of wintry storms—cold, rugged, immovable masses of rock, upon which a thousand tempests might wreak their fury in vain. But when these wintry days passed by, what wonder is it that men were allured by the smiling, genial landscape of the valleys, and wandered away until they found themselves at last bewildered in the midst of barren deserts?

It seems to me also uncharitable to withhold from those who have been involved in the Unitarian movement the praise which is due to great pecuniary liberality and to general kindliness of disposition. This has been, I freely admit, in no slight degree characteristic of those connected with this system. We are surrounded by enduring monuments of this liberality, and

this kindliness, in ten thousand forms, has left its memorials in innumerable sorrowing hearts which it has comforted and relieved.

In considering this system, and particularly that part of it which approaches most nearly to evangelical doctrine, we must, in charity, it seems to me, make a distinction between the faith of the heart and the head. It must be, of course, upon this ground that we believe in the Christian character of those who do not speculatively have faith in Christ as a divine Saviour. I doubt not that there is the want of this speculative belief on the part of multitudes, whose hearts trust as implicitly as ours in the sacrifice and intercession of a Divine Redeemer. They may not admit this idea in words, and yet their Christian life is kept burning and shining by that eternal fire in the heart which supreme love and adoration for the Lord Jesus alone could have kindled.

But with such charitable dispositions, and with so much of sympathy in reference to certain phases of this system, what difficulty stands in the way of a full and free fellowship so far as doctrine is concerned? Why not, it may be

said, waive these points of doctrine? But here we are met at once by the demands of what we hold to be, on the ground of reason, of Scripture, and the testimony of all ages of the Christian Church, necessary and fundamental truth. We must insist upon it; conscience will not allow us to waver one hair's breadth in regard to the foundation facts of Christianity: the Trinity in the Godhead, the supreme divinity and expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the native depravity of man, and the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Our charity goes, as we trust we have shown, where these truths are denied. Our sympathies are called out most largely and warmly toward those who are working their way to a recognition of them. We are glad to claim fellowship even before the language of such comes up to the precision and explicitness which we should desire. If there is any holding back with us, it is when the real vital point is wanting. For it must be evident that the highest view which may be taken of the character of Christ, even the attributing of divinity to him, is no appreciable approach to our position, unless he is distinctly recognized

as God, and the possibility of his being God and at the same time making in the flesh an expiation for our sins, found in the personal distinction in the Godhead. Since, if he is not really and truly God, however lofty may be his position, he is still a created being, infinitely inferior, therefore, to God, and no proper object for our adoration and supreme love. The strongest language which can be used, consistently with such a view, does not help the matter. We feel that we have not found Christ.

While such is my view of the positive and imperative demands of the truth, it seems to me that there is still much more room for charity in this direction than, perhaps, we have been accustomed to suppose. I have little confidence in the efficacy of the argument with Unitarians, as it has been usually conducted. It rests upon no principles which we hold in common. A generous appreciation of the position of those who differ from us, together with evidences of a hearty and anxious desire on our part that they might have the happiness of knowing Christ in all the glory and saving power with which he is invested, would do more than ten thousand ar-

guments to impress them favorably toward our views. Argument may be misunderstood. A warm and generous heart, filled with anxious desire for the spiritual welfare of others, is always recognized and felt.

I wish to say a few words in reference to our relations with those who do not differ from us materially in point of doctrine, but who hold entirely different views in respect to ecclesiastical organization. The circumstances which call us together at this time suggest this topic; for this ordination consummates not only a change in points of doctrine, but also in ecclesiastical relations. It is a profession, not only of orthodox doctrine, but also of adherence to the Episcopal Church. I for one am very anxious that our views in respect to the organization of the Church should be so held and stated as to conform to what we hold to be the truth, and at the same time relieve us from the suspicion of being exclusive and uncharitable. The points in our principles or practice which are usually objected to as such are the reordination of those who have not been episcopally ordained, and the fact that we do not invite into our pul-

pits those who have not received episcopal ordination. This has, I admit, at first view, the aspect of being uncharitable and exclusive. But we are certainly entitled to claim that, in the exercise of charity toward us, the nature and reason of our position should be considered. We believe that the ministry, as constituted with us, is apostolic ; that is, to take the very lowest view of it, that such a ministry existed in the time of the Apostles. And to say nothing more, it is not perfectly clear, as I understand it, to those disagreeing with us that such was not the case. But at any rate, we believe that it was so. Now, there is nothing uncharitable, certainly, in such a belief. It relates simply to a question of historical fact, and if it obliges us to the pursuit of a certain course, that course cannot be uncharitable. We may hold this point to be a very important one ; we may firmly believe that the preservation of the faith is connected with it and dependent upon it. But how can we express our adherence to this view, except by our practice ; and how by our practice, if we make no distinction between a ministry which does conform to what we

believe to be the apostolic model and one that does not? It is not with us, as is often supposed, a mere question of polity. In that case we admit that our position would be justly chargeable with exclusiveness. But it is a question of the preservation of the truth. We gladly recognize the presence and the saving influence of the truth in other Christian bodies. Our Church has never denied or questioned the validity of the official acts of ministers of the Gospel not episcopally ordained. We make no claims to a ministry more learned, more holy, or more successful than that of others; but we do claim that with our conscientious conviction that the ministry as constituted by the Apostles is an indispensable means to the most important end, and that, although the truth is now to be found elsewhere, still the interests of Christ's kingdom, in the succession of ages, are bound up with the constitution of the Church; we do claim, I say, that we are not uncharitable in putting these principles into practice, and establishing the rule, that those who minister in our congregations shall be episcopally ordained. To sanction any other practice would

be to deny in act that which we profess in word.

This division of the Christian world, and of our own Church also, into various parties, sometimes contending so bitterly with each other, is a most melancholy spectacle, and one is led to inquire whether it must always be so. Will the interests of the truth always require these divisions and mutual jealousies and misunderstandings? If so, how poor a preparation are we here making for the union of the heavenly world! I think, however, that we may readily detect in all this the operation of a law which is working beneficially. We are approaching a time, I firmly believe, when those who agree at all will agree more perfectly; when systems shall have worked themselves out to their results; and when what is unessential shall have been eliminated in the process, and the great body of believers shall be found gathered around the few fundamental principles of the Gospel. But that time is not yet. And still, while we see how far we are from such a state of things, we may see how it is that even parties and party spirit are working to that

end. A simple love for the truth and a noble spirit of charity are what must be secured before that end is attained. And in the meantime these very parties and factions, under God's providence are carrying things forward in that direction. No one will claim that the best results, in Church or in State have been brought about by the success of the views of one or another party, but by the action and reaction of one upon the other. So that it is unquestionably a fact that better results have on the whole been obtained by the combined action of these various parties, than if one, however pure, had directed and controlled the movement alone. And that is simply to say that God is wiser than any or all of those whom he employs as his instruments in the world.

I trust it will not be thought irrelevant if, in conclusion, I endeavor to point out some respects in which, in my judgment, our own Church is favorably situated in reference to the desire which prevails for more of unity among the followers of Christ. I fear, indeed, that any practical results in that direction are still far distant, but it is not in vain, it seems to me,

that the subject is agitated even now. I am glad, at all events, of the opportunity of speaking a word which has for its object the bringing more nearly together of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ.

On a moment's reflection we shall see that our own Church can meet, as no other Christian body can, this longing for union of which I have spoken. If there is to be a union of Christian people, it must be upon some basis of truth admitted by all and recognized as fundamentally necessary. To have no doctrinal basis whatever, no creed at all, is liberal indeed ; but it is so liberal that it reaches beyond Christianity, and may include the infidel, the Jew, the Mohammedan. The system ceases to be necessarily Christian, when it disowns a creed. To say that the Bible is the creed and the only creed helps the matter somewhat, to be sure, but we soon find that the question comes up as to the authority of the Bible, or as to what constitutes the Bible. The system cannot pronounce decisively upon these points without violating its principle of not having any creed. It must leave every one not

only to his own interpretation of the Bible, but to determine also what his Bible shall be; and thus, it is evident, the whole superstructure of Christianity may be swept away. I have known men who claimed to have no creed but the Bible, and yet who considered only three chapters in the whole Bible as of divine authority. It is evident, therefore, that those who reject creeds altogether cannot furnish a basis for the union of Christians.

Then, on the other hand, there is the difficulty which is the opposite of this. There are others who have creeds, but who have incorporated into them certain articles which they hold, indeed, as desirable to be believed, but which even they themselves do not hold to be essential to Christian faith. Such articles are those which relate to the relation between the sovereignty of God and the agency of man, or to the proper subjects for baptism, etc., about which, as all agree, Christians may differ. But just so soon as a number of Christians associate themselves together and establish as a test of communion with them a belief in certain articles, some of which they themselves admit not

to be essential to Christian faith, just so soon do they depart from the true idea of a Church of Christ, since their terms of communion exclude some whom Christ himself has received. Their basis excludes the infidel, it is true, but it excludes many a Christian also, and cannot, therefore, furnish a basis of union among those who are the followers of Christ.

Now, notice for a moment the position of our own Church in reference to this matter. Have we not, in the providence of God, a basis for union in a creed at once comprehensive and fundamental; so as to exclude everything outside of Christianity, and include everything within it? We require belief only in those few fundamental facts of Christianity which are declared in the Apostles' creed. The clergy, indeed, are required to subscribe the Thirty-Nine Articles, but not so the people. The creed of our Church is the simple creed of the Church in all ages, distinctive as Christianity itself, and yet comprehending every form and variety of Christian development. Here, then, and here only, is to be found, in this community, a Church which can satisfy this longing and rest-

less striving after Christian union. It is the Church which the masses need, and toward which they must necessarily tend when its true position and character are once understood. Whoever, then, is a friend to union among the followers of Christ, let him ask himself if there is anywhere so good a prospect of its promotion as in our own Church. I set aside now all claims as to the divine or even apostolic origin of our organization. I say nothing about that, but if you desire that the people of Christ should be one, so as to oppose one common front to the power of sin and death, then I ask you solemnly to consider whether such a consummation is possible except upon the basis of a creed like ours, which excludes all who do not hold what is universally admitted to be the Christian faith, and includes all who do.

But in connection with this desire for union, there is springing up everywhere a desire for something which will secure the permanence and stability of Christian faith. One great cause of this want of permanence is to be found in these very divisions which we have been considering. The consequence of having no creed

is the drifting off of certain portions, at least, of the body toward infidelity; and the consequence of having too minute and particular a creed is that any variation from it must be followed by separation from the body by which it is held. And so the process of division goes on, until men find it hard to tell what is fundamental, since every variety of religious opinion is represented by some Christian sect. Now, there is this peculiarity of the position of the Church which fits it to secure the permanence and stability of Christian truth. It has the most powerful conservative influences, and yet, at the same time, it admits without difficulty schools of doctrine which, in any other system, must be followed by the endless process of division. We all know that the Calvinist and the Arminian, the Baptist and the Pædobaptist, those who hold high views and those who hold low views of the Sacraments, may all find a home in the Church; while at the same time the Church, unshaken by these various and conflicting systems, holds forth in her liturgy and creeds the fundamental truths of Christianity, and proclaiming the remission of sins by

faith in Jesus Christ, passes on unchanged through the succeeding generations of the world.

Let me say a word in reference to the need which exists for more of reverence and dignity in the services of the sanctuary, and to the conviction which is becoming quite prevalent that these are to be secured only by liturgical worship. The taste and sober sense of the community are slowly working toward this result. Now, suppose that a taste for liturgical worship becomes very general, where is a liturgy that will be at all satisfactory to be found except that of the Episcopal Church? Other liturgies are admitted to be defective, by those who compile them, just so far as they differ from that of the Church. It is impossible that any other can have the impressiveness of this, since none other can possibly have its associations. There is no other liturgy which has come down to us with the accumulated wealth of the associations of every Christian age, none other which has about it the precious savor of the piety of the confessors and martyrs and apostles of the Church. This is an advantage which no one

pretends to deny, and which the Church alone possesses.

I wish finally to say that it is my deep conviction that the system and methods of our Church are favorable to union among Christians, since it is by them that the prevalent infidelity of the day may be most successfully met and resisted. This infidelity presents itself in three principal forms, first, that of the positive philosophy, which denies certainty to any knowledge but that of phenomena, and which would limit all man's thoughts and efforts and aspirations to the visible and tangible things by which we are surrounded; then that which denies the supernaturalism of Christianity and resolves its wondrous miracles into natural events or mythical narrations; and then that of Pantheism, the worship of nature or of heroes, and the foundation of that direful doctrine of the necessary progress of the human race, by which it passes, under the operation of irresistible laws, through one form after another of religious belief, until Christianity itself shall give place at last to a higher religion. Then there is the amazing imposture or

delusion of Spiritualism, that strange mingling of fanaticism and shrewd calculation, the facts of which are to be found either in skilful jugglery or the effects of natural laws as yet imperfectly understood. All these are hostile to the true progress and well-being of society, are hostile to morals and to the purity and happiness of social relations, are fatal to the true dignity and excellence of man, and leave him in his guilt, without a Saviour or the hope of everlasting life.

Now, every one who wishes well to his country, and desires the salvation of men, must be anxious to know in what way this fearful onset of infidelity may be rolled back. To meet these various systems by argument seems to me to be doing but little to accomplish the result. What we want is something which will have a silent and constant influence in the community, some system of things visible and audible, to be seen and heard of men at all times, and which, as monuments of great historic events keep alive the sentiment of patriotism, may by its presence teach the great lessons of religion. We want some system in the community which in its or-

der and arrangements assumes the great facts of Christianity, and thus impresses them upon the mind. We have such a system in the Church, and all will admit that it is not elsewhere to be found. It is our whole tendency to present the Church both as spiritual and visible ; it is the whole tendency of other Christians to present it as spiritual alone. The facts of Christianity are, so to speak, crystallized in the services of the Church into a permanent form. No one can tell the incalculable influence of such a system in its ceaseless testimony to the truth. More powerful than any argument or any appeal or any teaching, it moves irresistibly the minds of those who are unconscious of its influence. Let us have a great institution pervading society, in which the fundamental facts of Christianity have clothed themselves with forms, and let this institution be ever visibly and audibly present, having innumerable relations with the life of men, and we need have no fear of national apostasy and may laugh infidelity to scorn.

There is no time now to speak of the concessions which we might be willing to make to

bring about any practical union among Christians. For my part I should consider any concession for such a purpose as a small sacrifice, unless it stood very near the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Charity rejoices in that truth. There may be concessions and compromises everywhere else, but not there. This truth, and whatever is essential to it, must be maintained. We feel strong and confident upon such ground as this. Elsewhere we may have doubts and perplexities, but here the evidences accumulate with such vast comprehensiveness and manifold relations that no room is left with us for doubt. Nature, God's Word, our own consciousness and hearts, the history of Christianity, the history of the world, all cast their rays upon one common centre, the cross of Christ, and from that sacred spot beams forth all the light which has dispelled the shadows of this fallen world. From the darkness of the sepulchre, the Sun of Righteousness arose to enlighten and revive the earth. That we are sinners, utterly helpless in ourselves, is a fact of which, alas ! we can entertain no doubt ; that Christ is an Almighty Saviour, we also, with all the powers of our be-

ing, firmly believe, and it is our only hope o final rest and happiness in the heavenly world.

My Dear Brother: You are now to be commissioned to proclaim among us this only foundation for our hope of eternal life. I doubt not you have endeavored, through your whole ministerial career, to preach faithfully to sinful men, that they might be brought into the ways of holiness and prepared for the heavenly world. But a necessity has been laid upon you like that which was laid upon the Apostle Paul, when he said, "Yea, woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." You have, by the experiences of your own heart as well as by the diligent study of God's word, been brought to see the truth as it is in Jesus, and, after many doubts and fears, have rested in a conviction, as firm and lasting, I trust, as your immortality, that Christ is our Almighty Saviour and Redeemer, to be loved with no second love, but to be the object of our supreme affection and adoration. I cannot take it upon myself to counsel you in reference to duties and responsibilities with which you are more familiar than I; but I can express

to you the hearty sympathy, good-will and love of those among whom you enter to-day as your brethren. And yet suffer me to say a word in regard to the responsibilities of your work. It is a solemn thing, my brother, to be placed in the charge of immortal souls. There are many discouragements, many temptations to draw us from our duty. But remember that the time is short, and that the lips which proclaim the blessed news of eternal life will ere long be closed and hushed in the silence of the tomb. When we think of this we cannot be indifferent and unfaithful in our work. And it is a blessed thought, familiar, I know, to your own heart, that in all our difficulties and trials, Christ is with us, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

"I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, preach the Word, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. . . . Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy

ministry." And when the hour of your departure draws near, may the remembrance of many souls already saved, and many more yet to be saved through your ministry, comfort and sustain you with the blessed assurance that the grace of Christ has been sufficient for you ; and may you be able in humble and yet full assurance to exclaim with the Apostle, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course ; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

THE LITURGY

AND

CHRISTIAN UNION.

PREACHED IN TRINITY CHAPEL, NEW YORK, FEB. 21, 1864.

"Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people."—ISAIAH 56 : 7.

MY subject — THE LITURGY IN ITS RELATIONS TO CHRISTIAN UNION — leads me to speak of those features of the Liturgy which adapt it to be a form of prayer for all people, and to promote that unity among Christians for which our Saviour prayed.

The evils of division among Christians are so apparent and terrible that it is high time the subject of Christian Union received more serious consideration. We need the concurrent views of many observers at different points of

observation ; and as astronomers, gazing into the starry heavens from their many watch-towers, penetrate at last the secrets of the order and harmony of the universe, so shall we, by diligent comparison, arrive, perhaps, at the great laws of unity which must prevail in the visible kingdom of Christ.

That there are such laws we cannot doubt. To deny it would be to affirm that the ideal Christian Church, toward which the actual manifestation of it in the world must constantly tend, is out of all analogy with every other department in the universe. The most minute and apparently isolated facts resolve themselves into systems ; these systems, again, are bound together in still wider systems ; complex laws, as we ascend higher in the scale of being, unfold their complex operations and assume simpler forms, and so we go from infinite diversity to a higher and higher unity, until we find one universe in one God.

This unity, we should naturally suppose, also, must be the final consummation of the Church on earth ; for the nearer we come to Christ in spiritual experience, the nearer shall

we be to the spirit which prevailed when the Church, springing from beneath his feet as he ascended into heaven, was one. And this natural expectation ripens into confidence when we catch the tones of that wonderful prayer which our great High Priest offered for us as he was about to ascend the altar of sacrifice, "That they all may be one, even as thou art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."

This unity, if once attained, would naturally express itself in common worship. It is a question, therefore, which it becomes us to consider, what form this common worship would most reasonably be expected to assume. Each one of the many divisions of Christendom should consider this in relation to the peculiar form which is used by itself. This I purpose now doing in regard to the Liturgy, that we may see how far it is fitted to be a common prayer for all people, and how far its adoption is therefore calculated to promote the unity we desire.

The one great indispensable characteristic which such a form must possess is *universality.*

Let us see, then, what claims the Liturgy has to universality :

I. In its origin and the process of its growth.

II. In its harmony with and adaptation to human nature.

III. In the possibility of its use among all diversities of religious opinion, where fundamental truth is held.

I. In the first place, then, we are to consider its universality in its origin and the process of its growth.

It may seem to savor somewhat of self-glory for those of us who enjoy the use of the Liturgy to enlarge upon its excellence and its adaptation to all people ; but it must be remembered that the Liturgy is not the result of our wisdom or choice. We did not make it ; we find ourselves in possession of it, a heritage handed down to us from the great past. We are considering, let it be remembered, *the* Liturgy—*the* Christian Liturgy— a term which, in ecclesiastical history, has a meaning so distinct that it is impossible to mistake it. We

find through the whole of history one liturgical type prevailing under a vast number of modifications. In different parts of the Christian world we find Liturgies peculiar to each locality, but all adhering with fidelity to the universal type, and therefore all constituting only different and slightly varied forms of the one Christian Liturgy. The existence of four great Liturgies in early times, bearing the names respectively of St. Peter, St. James, St. Mark, and St. John, closely resembling each other, indicates one primitive liturgical type from which they sprang. The successive developments of Christian doctrine left their impress upon the Liturgy in these principal, or in other minor forms. The Liturgy of St. John, received originally in the British Isles, was modified by the then pure Liturgy of the Western Church. At last, but only a few hundred years before the Reformation, the primitive liturgical form was corrupted. The great work of the Reformation in England, after opening the Scriptures to the common people, was to restore the primitive type of the Christian Liturgy. We have,

therefore, in the Liturgy which our Church uses to-day, essentially the type and form of the universal Liturgy, springing, like a majestic tree, from Apostolic soil, and widening the vast sweep of its branches over the Christian world.

Such being the origin and growth of the Liturgy, it is easy to see what elements of universality have entered into it, as it has come down through the ages. While the original type has been faithfully preserved, each great epoch in the Church has touched the Liturgy with a living power, blotting out details of light or shade not in harmony with the whole, and adding new and still more attractive hues. We have glanced already at the bare external facts of its history, so as to catch some idea of the law and method of its growth. But we shall have a deeper impression of its universal character, if we see to what formative influences it has been subjected, and how wonderfully it has come in contact with and been moulded by the vast experience and development of the Christian Church. We first find

it a pure and sweet fountain, springing up from apostolic depths, like

> "Siloa's brook that flowed
> Fast by the oracle of God."

As it flows on through the generations, like the river of Eden, it is divided "into four heads." One, reflecting the gorgeous hues of the East, bears the name of the martyr Bishop and Saint of Jerusalem. Another, warmed by the suns and glowing sands of Africa, and by its genial heat alone keeping the life-blood in cold and decrepit Churches, has come down to us with the character and traditions of the second evangelist. The third, a grand, impetuous stream, like the great apostle whose name it bears, is destined to flow down through the Roman civilization, and bathe the shores of Latin Christendom through all their vast extent. The last, rising in the East, peaceful and serene, like the gentle disciple whom Jesus loved, flows to the distant West. From thence, with the consecration of the martyr-blood of Gaul, it finds its tranquil way to the British Isles, and mingling at last with the

swelling tide which comes pouring down through the Latin Church, in one broad stream, bearing upon its bosom the riches of all the generations through which it has flowed, it sweeps majestically on through the present age to the vast millennial sea.

In the process of development through which the Liturgy has passed, it has been enriched by the spoils of each great victory which the Church has gained over the hosts of error. The conflict with the Arian heresy gave to the Liturgy the Nicene Creed, and the creed which bears the great name of Athanasius. The mighty warfare carried on by Augustine against Pelagius brought out from the treasury of the Scriptures many a truth as to the corruption and helplessness of our nature, which has found its way into the Liturgy, in the form of supplication or praise. The victories of Anselm, in rescuing from the grasp of error and bestowing upon the Church a full and compact doctrine of the Atonement, can be traced in subsequent additions and omissions, recognizing the sole merit of Christ; and in the terrible contest with Rome, in the sixteenth

century, the martyr-fires consumed the base alloy which the last few hundred years had added, and left the pure gold of primitive and Apostolic truth.

The product of such an origin and such a growth, enriched through its whole development by such elements of universality, must have broad and deep relations to human nature ; and this leads us to the consideration of the second point.

II. The universality of the Liturgy in its relations to human nature.

It grows out of the very fact of the universality of its origin and growth that the Liturgy should be in harmony with the universal elements, experiences and wants of our nature. Whatever has been merely temporary and accidental in the history of the Christian Church, if it has embodied itself at all in the Liturgy, has, by the peculiar process to which the Liturgy has been subjected, been finally thrown off, and only those features which are of universal interest and application have remained. For it is evident that only that which found an echo in the heart of generation after generation

would be introduced, or, if introduced, retain its place. The Liturgy is accordingly the embodiment of the Christian instinct of worship. If through all those ages in which the Liturgy has been used, beginning with Apostolic times, and reaching down through the period of the Reformation to our own day, there has been a realization of the spiritual wants of man, a true idea of the great facts of redemption, then in the Liturgy we necessarily have the recognition of those wants and the presentation of those redemptive facts. And it can hardly be supposed that in all that vast period, and amid such rich and varied influences, there is a single spiritual want which has not found expression, or a single fact of the great plan of redemption which has not been set forth in all its saving power. It is to be remembered that we have had all this time two constant factors. Human nature has been the same, and the plan of redemption has been the same, revealed as fully, in all its facts, at first as now. Worship, which is the utterance of human nature under the influence of these facts, must, in the course of time, utter every possible experience of the

soul, as moved by every conceivable aspect of the revelation of God. Now, these utterances of worship have been registered in the Liturgy, and all our profound experiences, the most delicate touches of feeling, the loftiest aspirations of the spirit, have been crystallized, so to speak, in a permanent and symmetrical form.

But there is more than this in its universal harmony with and adaptation to human nature. If we analyze our mental and moral being, we shall find how wonderfully the Liturgy stands related to that being in all the principal aspects in which it can be regarded.

Take first the INTELLECT. It is not too much to claim that the Liturgy has the great characteristics of a work of genius, embodying the highest powers and adapted to satisfy the largest requirements of the intellect. It is not necessary that a work of genius should be the product of one mind. Indeed, the grandest results of genius are the products of the universal mind of the race. The British Constitution is thus one of the most amazing works of genius, and yet it is the product of the whole English mind. Neither is it necessary that the produc-

tion of a work of genius should be a conscious operation contemplating the final result. It has been said of the great architects who, from generation to generation, built up the mighty cathedrals of Europe, working under the inspiration of an instinct higher than themselves, "They builded wiser than they knew." And so this work of the ages is the unconscious product of the instinct of the Church, and has the fullest characteristic of a work of genius. For what is it that we find in a work of genius? Its chief characteristic is that it is organic—a creation—the expression of some central idea working itself out in every minutest part. Every portion of such a work must be vitally related to every other portion, and there must be a unity in and through them all. It is also true of the highest products of genius, that the great archetypal idea is repeated constantly in higher and higher forms, just as the same type runs on through all the processes of creation, but becoming more beautiful and wonderful at each successive stage. Let us look at the Liturgy and see if it has these characteristics. We have evidently a great central idea as the vitaliz

ing principle of the whole—the idea of worship. But in the comprehensive idea of worship is included the expression of all the religious emotions, and the recognition of those truths by which the emotions are excited and sustained. Penitence, faith, thanksgiving, praise, adoration, supplication, intercession, sacrifice, all enter into the idea of worship, and all must be pervaded by the great truths of the Gospel, so that what might be otherwise mere transient emotion may be transformed into permanent principle by the influence of the truth. In the Liturgy this central idea, in one or the other of its aspects, like a system of nerves and muscles, pervades the whole structure, and binds in vital union each part to all. See, for a moment, with what symmetry this formative idea disposes the various portions of the service of prayer and praise ; how logically it unfolds itself from step to step ; how orderly is its development, and how the all-pervading law penetrates to every minutest detail. The worshipper is first brought into that attitude in which every true worshipper must stand—a realization of his filial relation to God through peni-

tence and forgiveness. The confession and declaration of absolution are followed by the "Our Father." The first impulse of the heart in this recognized relation is praise, and the Liturgy, reflecting this fact in our nature, embodies in the Venite the call to praise. But the soul, not yet so strong as to soar upon its own wings of adoration, must be borne up for a while, and so it is lifted upon the eagle wings of the Psalms. Then it is prepared for flights of its own, by instruction from the Scriptures, first from the Old Testament, looking forward in spirit and prophecy to the New. And lest the subordination of instruction to worship should fail to be expressed, between the Old and the New we have a glorious burst of praise in the Te Deum, binding together, in idea, the two Covenants, and suggesting the harmony between them. After the New Testament, praise is again the instinct of the renewed nature. Then what we have received at any and all times as instruction, is summed up in a statement of our belief; and now, through all these exercises, if they have been rightly used, the soul is ready for supplication and intercession. But

this, by a law of our nature, grows more intense, and the corresponding idea in the service changes the form into that of the Litany, with short and passionate exclamations, the repeated petitions of the people in the same words.

But the central idea unfolds itself in new forms, taking all the elements which have preceded up into a higher sphere in the Communion, which is the culminating act of Christian worship. We stand here, too, upon profounder theological truth. The law of God, in all its vast requirements, fitly precedes the setting forth of the Saviour as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. The Gospel and Epistle lead us into the very arcana of revelation, and amid the lowliest expressions of penitence, the most joyful assurances of forgiveness, and the loftiest ascriptions of praise, we renew the scene of the Last Supper, and worship ends in the spiritual offering and sacrifice of ourselves, and in the symbolism of our incorporation into Christ.

Thus analyzed, the Liturgy reveals the great characteristics of a work of the highest genius, and the correspondence between it and the laws

of the human mind must enable it to satisfy the permanent and universal demands of the intellect.

Much that has already been said serves to show its relation to the emotional part of our nature. But it may be well for us to see still further how the Liturgy is adapted to excite the EMOTIONS, and how the emotions find their most fitting expressions in its accents of prayer and praise. The law of our nature is that the emotions are excited by the presentation of objects which are so constituted as to move our hope or fear, our hatred or love. It is a remarkable fact, too, that the best and holiest emotions are excited gradually. They are not to be called into exercise by violent methods, and the process by which sympathetic responses of love and devotion are secured must be one in which the grounds of these emotions slowly unfold themselves. The Liturgy, growing as it has out of the instinct of the Church, conforms to this psychological law. There are at first no passionate appeals, nothing intense in the expressions of devotion. All is calm and tranquil, adapted to an unemotional condition

of the mind. But ere long truths and facts begin to come up to view, which let in a gleam of light and heat upon the emotional nature. When the mind has been thoroughly penetrated with scriptural truth, and has summed up, in audible utterance, the facts of redemption, then the emotional nature has become excited, and now the strongest expressions lose all exaggeration and become the natural utterances of the soul. We prostrate ourselves before the throne of God, and beg for mercy as miserable sinners. Electric sympathies bind us to other hearts; their joys and sorrows become ours. In our moments of deepest penitence, and the raptures of our highest devotion, none are forgotten. We intercede for rulers in Church and State, for travellers by land or sea. In this ardor of our love, which has thus been kindled at the altar of devotion, we have forgiven, and we pray even for our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers. And then our sympathizing thoughts turn to those who are in trouble and sorrow. The weary, heart-sick prisoner and captive; the widow and fatherless children we commend to the defence and protection of the Lord.

But all these emotions, thus stirred and exercised, are without satisfaction and peace, except as the glorious presence of the Saviour moves before the mind and they can rest upon him. And then relief is found for feelings, which have no other fitting object, in those passionate exclamations in which all our hopes are staked upon his sacrifice : " By thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and passion, by thy death and burial, by thy glorious resurrection and ascension, good Lord deliver us."

It is wonderful to notice, in the Communion Office, the correspondence to this law of our emotional nature. Our emotions are now supposed to be in the liveliest exercise. We gather in sweet, affectionate intercourse around the table of our Lord. What deep and ardent expressions of humility and love now, in all the truthfulness of nature, tremble upon our lips ! We bewail our sins and wickedness ; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable. The preciousness of the blood-shedding of Christ, and the innumerable benefits of his passion, are again and again suggested to the mind. His exceed-

ing great love, his blessed passion and precious death, echo the feelings of our hearts, and we lose all thought of figure and symbol in the reality, to our aroused emotions, of the reception of his precious body and blood.

It is this characteristic of the Liturgy that makes it an object of affection to those by whom it is used. These emotions become intertwined with it, they hang upon it, like rich clusters of grapes upon the trellis which supports them, bound to it by the ties of association, and ripening upon it to their full perfection. This cannot be the case unless there is a fixed and permanent form around which the affections can cluster. We can never know how vastly our emotional nature is indebted to it as an object of our affections. It has entered, year after year, with its exhaustless wealth into our spiritual being ; and as the sweet birds, caught from the wild wood, make melody for us in our homes, so these winged words have been imprisoned in the mysterious chambers of memory, and by day and by night make sacred music to the soul.

A work so universal as this cannot leave un-

touched the remaining aspect in which our nature may be regarded. It must have its harmonious relations with and adaptations to the WILL. The emotions lie but just behind the will, and that which so profoundly stirs the emotions cannot but lay its hand upon the voluntary faculties of the mind. A great subject is thus opened to us, though we can only allude to it—the Liturgy as a discipline in individual and national life. Its power in the formation of character is one of the points in which its vast universality is most clearly to be seen.

The method of this influence is analogous to what we find in all the great forces of nature. The usual operation of the laws of nature is by incessant pressure of influence. Gravitation is a constant force—acting at all times — its agency felt no more sensibly at one time than another, and yet it is a power which holds the universe together. The vast iceberg which is swept down by ocean currents into summer seas, is not smitten and shattered by the lightning's stroke, but, under the constant influence of the sun, the huge mass melts silently away. This is the method of the influence of the Lit-

urgy upon the will. It subjects it constantly to repetitions of the same pressure. It urges the will toward duty and holiness by gentle but incessant constraint. It puts men in a position where they must be either hypocritical or sincere worshippers, and obliges them to make the choice.

As this law is best illustrated by instances of its operation, it may not be inappropriate to refer to some touching evidences, in the life of the great Dr. Johnson, of the influence of the solemnities of the Church upon his religious life. On Good Friday, 1764, after those services which set before us the very scene of the mysterious sacrifice of the cross, deeply moved to self-examination and amendment of life, he writes in his journal: "I have made no reformation; I have lived totally useless, and more sensual in thought. This is not the life to which heaven is promised." And he adds his earnest purpose to lead a different life. On Easter Day, under the influences of the glorious events commemorated in this festival, his will is powerfully moved by the thrilling service in which he has engaged. "I prayed," he

says, "for resolution and perseverance to amend my life. O God, grant me to resolve aright and keep my resolutions, for Jesus Christ's sake."

III. The point to which I would finally ask your attention, and to which I shall very briefly refer, is the universality of the Liturgy in relation to diversities of religious opinion. The theory upon which the Liturgy is constructed is the embodying in it of all essential and fundamental truth, and the exclusion of that which is mere matter of individual opinion. If it is necessary to recognize in public worship the peculiar views which, as a part of the Christian family, we hold, then the universality of the Liturgy, in this respect, would be an objection rather than a benefit; but in that case sectarianism, or separation upon points not essential, must be regarded as the right and normal condition of the Church. And since there are few who will admit this, we must conclude that diversities of religious opinion, outside of that which is deemed absolutely fundamental, ought not to interfere with unity of worship. But if this is the case, we must have a form of wor-

ship from which these individual peculiarities are excluded, and which yet embodies the great truths recognized by the Universal Church. Now, the Liturgy meets just these requisitions. I do not see how any one of the evangelical Churches, holding the fundamental truths of the Gospel as contained in the universal creeds, could find any difficulty, so far as principle is concerned, in its use. But to bring the matter directly to a test. The Baptist would find, in this service of worship, nothing that would contravene his peculiar views. He might still retain his own opinions as to the mode and the subjects of baptism, and yet use every word of the Liturgy appointed for public worship. The Presbyterian, the Congregationalist, the Dutch Reformed, may hold what views they please as to the Calvinistic system, or methods of Church goverment and organization. The Liturgy stands grandly aloof from such questions, and no word which it contains need disturb the most earnest advocate of these particular theological views. Or, take the Methodist, his Arminianism will not be rudely shocked by any accent here of supplication or

praise. And yet, all these find here that which they all acknowledge to be the sum and substance of fundamental Christian truth. The very process of the growth of the Liturgy has insured this, for everything local, transient, and individual has been eliminated, and that only which has the sanction of the Universal Church has been retained.

Now, it may be said that our proposal of the Liturgy as a basis for Christian union is a sectarian position on our part, and that it is simply asking all men to agree with us. Well, we must stand somewhere, and labor for Christian union from some given point. If the mere fact that we stand somewhere is sectarianism, then we are justly liable to the charge. But does our position involve anything sectarian? We ask for unity in worship, and our very position is that of the abandonment of everything individual and transient for the permanent and universal. We ask that all but fundamental truth, universally acknowledged to be such, in worship should be given up; and then the question will be as to universality and general adaptation and adoption between the

forms of prayer in the Liturgy, and the forms of prayer which are furnished for congregations in extemporaneous worship. There can be little doubt, it seems to us, that if there ever is a realization of unity in worship, it will be on a liturgical basis and after the model of a historic Liturgy.

We have thus considered the Universality of the Liturgy :

I. In its origin and the process of its growth.

II. In its harmony with and adaptation to human nature.

III. In the possibility of its use among all diversities of religious opinion, where fundamental truth is held.

There are many indications of a tendency, throughout the Christian world, to visible unity and a common liturgical worship. The great difficulty with which this tendency has to contend is the conviction that Christian union is not possible, or, if possible, not desirable. But this shows a strange blindness to the designs of God in his government of the Church,

and a strange indifference to the beauty of that harmony and concord which called forth from the Psalmist the exclamation : "Behold how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." This blindness to the certain signs of the times is as if one should stand in the presence of the morning, as one flush of golden light after another shoots up the eastern sky, and yet declare that it heralds no coming day. This want of appreciation of the beauty and blessedness of Christian union is as if one should be surrounded by a chaos of grand and lovely objects, and yet desire no all-powerful hand to reduce them into the order and harmony of one magnificent whole. We love diversity of sounds, the infinitely varied accents of Christian experience, the multitudinous offering up of prayer and praise. But we would have them all, the pealing tones or the softest melody, the plaintive supplication or the exultant shoutings of triumph, swell forth from one grand instrument, vast as Christianity itself, and touched by the infinite skill of the great Master's hand.

Upon all those to whom the Christian Lit-

urgy has come down through the ages, a most solemn responsibility is imposed. They possess that which is the type of a universal worship. Let them see to it that they send it broadcast with the everlasting Word of God over the world. And let the longing for Christian union and common worship blend with our desires and aspirations for a higher and better life, even as we pray that we may follow the blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, on the very ground that God has "knit together his elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of His Son Christ our Lord."

THE CHURCH'S

LAW OF DEVELOPMENT.

PREACHED BEFORE THE CONVENTION OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK, SEPT. 25, 1872.

IT cannot be regarded otherwise than as a privilege to stand in this place upon this occasion. But it is a privilege which is attended with a very special and delicate responsibility. The preacher, in such a case, is accepted for the time, by his brethren, as their teacher, and as their teacher, too, upon a class of subjects specially appropriate to such occasions—those which relate to the Church of which we are ministers and representatives. It is the diversity of opinion which exists in regard to this class of subjects that invests the position of the preacher, on such an occasion, with the responsibility of which I have spoken. No true

man would be willing, or could be reasonably expected, to speak otherwise than in the line of his positive convictions. While endeavoring conscientiously to do this, I recall that beautiful passage, in one of the letters of Ignatius, in which he speaks of himself as a "man given to unity." It is my earnest desire, in what I may have to say, both by fidelity to my own convictions and justice to those of others, to promote "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

The portion of the Holy Scriptures which suggests the special subject upon which I would address you is found in Eph. 3 : 14, 15 : "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."

Every one, who reflects upon the subject, must be impressed with the design, which is manifested in the system of things in which we are placed, that men should be organized into societies. To say nothing now of the social instincts and tendencies, under the influence of which men come into every variety of mutual relations, there are certain societies which exist by express divine provision, and are broadly

distinguishable from all others in the relation which they sustain to mankind. The first of these divine institutions, lying as it does at the very foundation of society, in the broadest sense of the term, is the *Family*. The next, in which man enters into a sphere of higher and freer discipline, is the *State*. The last and highest of the divinely-established societies, in which man enters on the life eternal, is the *Church*.

It is impossible rightly to understand any one of these societies without having seized upon the great principles by which the character of the others is determined. They are all linked together by the common ideas which pervade them, and are different aspects of one great plan for the moral welfare and redemption of mankind. It is wonderful to notice how, in the successive development of these societies, some fundamental idea is lifted up into higher relations and a new significance. Take, for instance, the idea of fatherhood. It exists in its simplest form in the Family. It is carried up, with more complex relations, through the patriarchate and the tribe, into the State. It reaches its highest form and development in

the Church, where the reverence, the loyalty, and the love in which we have been disciplined in the lower relations are lifted up to the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."

In this connection we shall notice the remarkable significance of one of the terms which the apostle here uses, and which in our version is translated "family." Adopting, for our present purpose, the view of those biblical critics who consider the word "family" here to refer to the whole body of the redeemed, our attention is at once arrested by the peculiarity of the word in the original. It is, as you remember, Πατριὰ, and suggests instantly to the mind the relationship which exists between this and the other divine societies in the world. It is clearly intimated in this word that the Church is not merely a society, that it is not merely a divine society, but that it is also a society based, in the highest sense, upon that fatherly and filial relation which has its lower expression in the Family and the State, but which here reaches its highest form in the

fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men in Christ Jesus.

And while there is this same fundamental idea running through these divine institutions, and assuming a higher character at each stage of its development, there is also a progress in the universality of the sphere in which this fundamental idea is manifested. The Family is limited in its sphere by the necessary operation of natural laws. The State has a wider field, but it too is confined within the limits of national development, determined usually by the form and extent of areas bounded by mountains, or rivers, or seas. The tendency toward universality, which is thus evident, reaches its fullest manifestation in the Church, which is the one only universal society, ever struggling toward the realization of that ideal which includes the whole race of man.

This idea of a universal society, established in truth and righteousness, has always haunted the imagination of the profoundest thinkers and noblest spirits of the world. Plato unfolds his conception of it in those wonderful anticipations of the progress of human thought

through more than two thousand years, and in those magnificent word-pictures of man and society which we find in the "Republic." Dante, whose marvellous genius had gathered up all the treasures of knowledge which human inquiry had accumulated, made his "Divina Commedia" an embodiment of the laws and principles, as he conceived them, of this divine society. St. Augustine soared higher than Plato or Dante in his vision of the "City of God." And with what wonder and awe do we follow the prophetic history of this society in the Apocalypse; trace its bitter trials through centuries of persecution and sacrifice; mark its triumphs; and see it, at last, the new Jerusalem, the eternal kingdom of heaven!

If we wish to catch the significance of this divine society, and to understand somewhat of its fundamental principles and laws, we have the starting-point in the idea of it presented in the text. It is a Family. It is also a State. The fatherhood upon which it is based is the fatherhood of God. Its brotherhood is the brotherhood of man in Christ. Its ideal is as universal as the race.

Starting, then, from this point, we find that there are two prominent ideas in each of these lower institutions, the Family and the State, which we should expect to find reappearing in an intenser form in the Church. These two ideas are those of stability and progress. While the institution of the Family is subject to a law of development, it is principally characterized by conservative elements. The principles upon which it is based, and the phenomena it presents, are substantially the same, age after age. The State has also its conservative elements, but is chiefly characterized by mobility and progress. If, then, the relations of these three divine societies are such as we have supposed, we shall find this twofold character in the Church. There will be elements of stability and elements of change and development. Both classes of elements will exist in an intenser form than before ; but the elements of change and development having already asserted, in the State, their superiority in power, will have an ascendency in a still higher degree in the Church. It is this law of development, passing up from these lower societies

into the Church, that we are now to consider.

Think for a moment how wonderful is this fact of development in these lower societies! How does family life everywhere expand itself into the life of states! And these states, how vastly varied are the forms they assume and the vicissitudes through which they pass! The generations in them struggle, sometimes blindly, scarcely ever with more than imperfect consciousness, toward some higher and divinely appointed end. The progress of states, though strangely devious, yet when the whole of history is considered, is seen to have been, by the operation of some mysterious and irresistible law, toward wider knowledge of truth, more substantial victories over evil, and increase of the welfare and the happiness of mankind.

It would seem certain, then, that a similar law of development would be found to exist in the Church. But what is its nature, and what are our relations to it, are questions most important for us to consider.

This development must be conceived of as a development of the Church as such, and not

merely of the individuals of which it is composed. Each generation, therefore, has a vantage ground which it inherits from the experience and discoveries of preceding generations; so that, although this inheritance is not always wisely used, and consequently particular generations in the Church's history may fail to advance beyond the point reached by those who preceded them, yet the accelerated rate of progress, after such stationary periods, is a sufficient compensation, and vindicates the operation of the law.

This progress in the Church is, like the analogous progress in civil society, chiefly an intellectual rather than a moral progress; that is, a progress in the discovery and apprehension of truth rather than in spiritual life. The history of the Church discloses an ever-widening range of truth, into the possession of which the Church enters. It discloses also a progress in the adaptation of the Church's method to the new and more complex needs of advancing generations. But it seems clear that there is not a corresponding progress, or higher attainments, in the same ratio, in the Christian life. This

fact limits, for our consideration, the sphere of the Church's development to the clearer apprehension of truth, and to the ever-varying adaptation of its means and agencies to the ever-varying needs of the world.

This twofold progress is brought about, on the supernatural side, by the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit; and, on the natural side, by the operation of an intellect prepared, by a sanctified heart, for the investigation and practical use of truth. The material upon which this investigation is to be employed is already furnished. There is no addition to or development of that. There is no new revelation of facts upon which Christianity is based. Just as nature is a finished and complete system, so revelation is also. It is a clearer knowledge of the system which we need, and in which progress is made. It is to be remembered, also, that this development in the Church runs parallel with, and is largely conditioned by, secular and scientific progress. The two are so intimately connected in the great system of which they form a part that their dislocation is impossible.

Having thus considered some of the laws and principles of this development, we are prepared to notice some of the salient and most characteristic points in its history. It is not uniform movement which presents itself for our consideration, but alternations of rest and extraordinary activity. It was after a long period, apparently of intellectual repose, that the Church found itself, in the Nicene age, in the possession of a new consciousness of truth which had been but dimly apprehended before. The Middle Ages, the influence of which upon the Church has been so often both overrated and undervalued, gave to the world St. Anselm's profound theory of the Atonement and its relation to the divine government. A still vaster stride in this wonderful development was taken at the great Reformation, when seeds of thought sown long before were springing up in abundant harvests—when the world was all alive with the new intellectual activity which had been excited. A thousand fetters, by which the human spirit had been bound, were broken ; a thousand new impulses toward freedom and a higher and better life had been given.

But, among all the marvellous achievements of that period, none is more conspicuous than the new view which the Church then gained of the work of Christ. It awoke to a full consciousness of his divinity and his relation to the Godhead in the Nicene period. It rose to a truer apprehension of the nature of atonement in the time of the Schoolmen. At the Reformation it laid hold with a grasp which no power can unloose upon the fact of the finished work and the free salvation accomplished by Christ. In the thrilling joy of this clear apprehension of truth, this consciousness of vast development and entrance upon a new career, that portion of the Church Universal to which we belong, our Church, and to which our allegiance is due, gave herself a new name, inscribed it deep down upon the very foundations on which she stands, and calls herself, in commemoration of the victories of that period, *Protestant*, henceforth and forever!

Before considering what circumstances are favorable to this general development, we must not be unmindful of the fact that we are living now in the midst of a development more won-

derful than any of the previous ages. The great idea of the theology of the present day is that of the love of God. This love, in all its ineffable exhibitions to the Family, the *Patria*, of which God is the Father, becomes the inspiring motive to the love of the brotherhood in Christ Jesus. It is this mighty truth, apprehended as never before, by the moral sense rather than the logical faculty, which is now stirring beneath the phenomena of this new democratic age in which we live. It is the animating principle in all those efforts which are now made for the welfare and redemption of man. It has taught the lesson of the priceless value of every member of the race. It has made every burden which lies on any child of Adam a burden on the Christian's heart. Under the inspiration of this principle, the Church goes out among dark and desolate places, sighs and groans in sympathy with human woe, and stretches out her pitying hands to rescue and to save. Perhaps this is the final period of its development. Could there be a more glorious consummation, if this ideal should be realized !

"The world is old :
But the old world waits the time to be renewed.
Toward which new hearts, in individual growth,
Must quicken and increase to multitude,
In new dynasties of the race of men ;
Developed whence, shall grow spontaneously
New Churches, new economies, new laws
Admitting freedom, new societies
Excluding falsehood. *He* shall make all new."

After these considerations, the inquiry suggests itself, What circumstances are most favorable to this development? It has been found, throughout the whole history of the State and the Church, that one condition of progress and development is always present, and that is the conflict of different parties and schools of opinion. Nothing could be sadder than the accounts which have come down to us of the bitterness of partisan warfare in the Church, through which, nevertheless, the purification of the Church has again and again been accomplished. These are the abuses of that which is a necessary and beneficent feature in human society. It is a curious fact that there are such limits placed, in human nature, to individual

diversities of opinion that we seldom find men standing alone in such matters, isolated from their fellows. As an almost universal rule, we find men of a certain temperament and certain types of education grouped together in parties and schools, and held together by a common interest in what they hold to be important principles or ideas. Such groups or parties we find in the New Testament period of the Church. They have characterized it at every period of its history. Some of these parties have served a certain purpose for a time, and then disappeared. Some have rooted themselves so deeply in the Church's life that they have been permanent elements in it for centuries ; and there are others which seem, in one form or another, to run through the whole history of the Church. There has been abundant occasion, all through this history, to mourn over exhibitions of party spirit and partisan aggrandizement ; but no man, it seems to me, can deny the beneficent influence which parties, as such, have exercised, and the impossibility of any true progress in the Church without them. See, for a moment, the method by which different schools, if ani-

mated by high and generous feeling, will promote the discovery and establishment of truth. Since more or less of error will creep into all systems, the mistaken positions which will be found in all ecclesiastical parties will be exposed, and more or less qualified, by the rigid scrutiny of opposite parties, to which they will be subjected. The very fact of opposition will incite to more thorough examination of the ground assumed; and, though it sometimes leads to an obstinate adherence to that which has once been received as true, it more generally leads to an abandonment, sooner or later, of that which is found to be false. In our present state, in which we know but in part, our great need is to know more. Inquiry, restless, persistent inquiry, insatiable searching after truth, is an imperative necessity of the Church, until we shall know even as also we are known. But from the very moment when our searching begins, we shall be thrown upon different tracks; and, while the number of those paths is limited by the laws of the mind, so that we travel in company upon them, yet they apparently diverge more and more, and some seem to run in

opposite directions; but a mysterious attraction seems to keep the different groups within sight and hailing distance of each other, and it is found at last that the complex movement of the whole has been, with greater or less variations, toward a common end. It is thus that God in his wisdom makes the errors of one class of men correct the errors of another, thus causing the very follies of men to praise him in the discovery of his truth.

It would seem to be necessary, therefore, if a man would aid in this development and progress of the Church, that he should submit to the conditions under which alone, in the present state of things, it is to be secured, and suffer himself to be drawn, by his convictions and sympathies, into affiliation with that school which most nearly expresses his own views or seems to him to promise best in its influence for the prosperity of the Church. If the issues upon which the Church is more or less divided are not important, then it follows that the chief energies of the Church are expended upon trifling questions, a humiliating concession which none of us, happily, feels compelled to

make. But if these issues are important, then it would seem as if he must be wanting in clearness of vision who confuses these lines of distinction ; or, if clearly discerning them, must be wanting in masculine vigor and earnest conscientiousness, if he fail to show himself unmistakably upon the one side or the other. I was very much struck, not long since, with a passage, characterized by rare wisdom, in a letter from the distinguished Dr. Nott, formerly President of Union College, to the late Bishop of Pennsylvania. He says : " Where there are party lines drawn in a Church, and especially where these lines are understood to be the boundary lines of great principles, no man holding an important station can maintain a perfect state of neutrality, nor can he assume to do it, without eventually losing the respect of both parties and of the community itself ; for it is natural to respect men differing from us in principles, more than men who are understood to have no principles at all." Carrying out the idea of this admirable passage, it would seem to me to be a happy day when the truth is generally recognized that the Church is more cath-

olic than any of its members can possibly be ; that the questions which agitate the Church are questions in regard to which every minister, at least, should have some decided convictions ; and as it is impossible for him to hold the contradictory propositions which are presented to him, he will do wisely and best for the Church to declare which he does hold, and devote himself, with generous consideration for others, but with earnest devotion, to the cause which he has thus espoused. Such a general recognition of the legitimacy of different schools of opinion in the Church, and the part which they play in its development, would lead to the abandonment of that dream of absolute uniformity, the effort to secure which has been such a fruitful cause of alienation and division, and to an acceptance of that law of diversity in unity which so wonderfully characterizes the works of God.

If, in this imperfect state of being, the development of the Church is thus brought about by the collision of opposing sentiments, in different schools, it becomes a very important question whether the relations of these schools to

each other may not be animated by a more Christian spirit, and placed upon a more satisfactory Christian basis, without impairing fidelity to what is regarded as Christian truth. The *odium theologicum* has been proverbial, and the type of the bitterest hatred and hostility. It is a marked feature of our age that these asperities are to so large a degree softened, and that, too, without any necessary diminution of devotion to truth. When we remember the circumstances under which religious opinion is usually formed ; how almost inevitable it is that a certain class of philosophical views, or the absence of such views, will give a certain definite direction to religious thought ; how greatly it is affected by social position and companionship ; how dependent it is upon temperament and general physical condition ; when, in addition to all these mysterious influences, which exercise so powerful an effect upon religious opinion, we remember that each one of us is fallible, that there is no more infallibility of the individual than there is of the pope ; especially when we think of the effect of death in arresting the animosities of theological and ecclesias-

tical conflict, and how the kindly feelings and generous sympathies flow forth to a fallen opponent—may we not well ask ourselves whether the magnanimity which is possible after death may not be possible during the life of those whose opinions we repudiate. When we read of the chivalrous feelings which, in the olden time, animated the Christian and the Saracen hosts, in the hostilities of mortal strife ; the dignified courtesy extended to each ; the indignant refusal to take any base advantage of the foe, and the heroic sentiment that led the Florentine Christians to ring their bells before rushing to the attack, in order that the enemy might not be taken unawares, we should blush with shame should it be found that there is less of honor and magnanimity among those members of the family of Christ who are contending with each other for the truth.

I have said that there has been a great softening of theological and ecclesiastical asperities. The whole tone of controversy on these subjects is less bitter and more just. Let us be thankful for it, and feel that there is yet room for improvement. The right spirit, in its ful-

ness, may be expected to come when, not repression but liberty, within the widest limits of the Church's toleration and comprehensiveness, is seen to be the true law of the Church's life and development. This result might well flow from the recognized fact that we are members of a Family, with one common Father, and ar brethren in Christ Jesus.

But the difficulty here is that, in the view of so many, there is no way of contending valiantly for the faith so effectual as putting our opponents under ecclesiastical axes and harrows ; and, i we can not succeed in that, of severing all ecclesiastical ties by which we are bound to them. This is a policy which has the advantage of plainness and simplicity. It looks bold and thorough. But it is one which has in all ages been attended with immense loss to the Church. Nothing but infallibility will justify it ; and even the supposed possession of infallibility will not justify it, unless a man or the Church can infallibly know that he or it is infallible.

The argument, by which such a policy is enforced, inevitably breaks down when pushed to its logical results. The principle of ecclesiasti-

cal seclusion from error would lead to separation from everybody, for everybody differs from us in some point, which, if carried to its extremest consequences, would involve, in our view, all the error in the universe. The final landing-place of the argument is in that position in which a man says, "I alone am the Church; I alone am a Christian!"

I certainly shall not be understood as undervaluing the importance of those questions which agitate the Church. My whole argument is based upon a sense of their vast importance. Neither would I compromise one jot or tittle of principle, or of clear conviction as to the best methods and agencies by which the interests of the truth can be subserved. What I plead for is an unfettered development, so far as any ecclesiastical repression is concerned, of historical tendencies in the Church; the freest possible inquiry and investigation; the most earnest, while fair and honorable, condemnation of what we believe to be error, and advocacy of what we believe to be truth. These are the weapons and the only legitimate weapons, of our warfare. So far as any tendencies in the Church are dan-

gerous, and some of them I feel to be very full of danger, this method of meeting them seems to me the only one which is safe or wise. And this I say though certain of these tendencies, in my understanding of them, tremble, on the one side, upon the very verge of infidel rationalism, and on the other, of the grossest superstition and idolatry. But it is more than doubtful whether we could safely dispense with any one of the schools out of which even these tendencies proceed.

Let us look for a moment at the relation of these schools of opinion to some of the great interests of Christianity at the present day. It is impossible to make any classification of them which shall be more than approximately correct. But for all practical purposes, the ordinary classification of them in this Church—as the Broad, High, and Low or Evangelical schools—is sufficiently accurate. Accepting this classification, I would endeavor with entire frankness to consider some of their prominent characteristics.

Among the prominent ideas in the Broad Church movement is the widening of the catho-

licity of the Church by reducing its dogmatic basis. The principle upon which it proceeds is that the fewer and more fundamental the things which the Church requires to be believed, the greater will be the number of those who will adhere to the Church. That this tendency may be, and has been, carried to such an extent as to threaten the sacrifice of some of the fundamental articles of the faith must be admitted. But when we remember how, in modern times, the ancient creeds have been overlaid with cumbrous confessions and elaborate theological systems, and what a fruitful source has thus been opened of controversy and division, this movement must be regarded as having a salutary character, in so far as it is a protest against that traditionalism which constantly adds to the things which must be believed, and is also an assertion of the sufficiency of the universal creeds of Christendom. It is, in this aspect of it, essentially a catholic as opposed to a sectarian school.

Another characteristic of this school is its recognition of the importance and value of modern critical investigation. This critical investi-

gation, especially as applied to the Scriptures, has been regarded with great suspicion by many excellent Christian people. It has, unquestionably, been greatly abused. But those who entertain such apprehensions forget that criticism is constructive as well as destructive, and that the right use of the critical method is sure to repair the evil which a false use of it has occasioned. The critical method is simply an approved instrument of investigation—a means for ascertaining historical truth. The use of this method does, indeed, from time to time, modify the generally received interpretations, especially of the historical portions of the Scriptures. It may lead to new conclusions as to the date and authorship of certain books of the sacred canon, and the various circumstances under which they were written. It compels, perhaps, a reconsideration of the grounds upon which various ecclesiastical claims are urged, substituting new and surer grounds, it may be, in their stead. But all this is not only to be expected, but is eminently desirable ; unless it is to be supposed that in all these respects the Church has long since reached the full measure

of the truth. The value of the results to be attained abundantly justifies the risks attendant upon their attainment.

I have already suggested the danger that this tendency may not only throw off some of the superfluous accretions of Christianity, but go to the length of denying or undervaluing some of the fundamental articles of the faith, the very basis on which Christianity rests. This is especially true in regard to the doctrine of the Atonement. Too many, in this school of thought, while giving special prominence to the manward side of the Atonement, have ignored its Godward efficacy, and lifted their hands perilously near this altar of the sacrifice of the Son of God. But in the historic Church, with its unchanging creeds and universal testimony, this tendency has been kept within bounds ; and we are to remember that it is to this very spirit of free inquiry and independence of mere traditionalism that we owe the Anselmian theory of the Atonement.

This line of thought leads naturally to the importance of other schools in the Church, not only for their qualifying and restraining influ-

ences, but also for the special service which they render to the cause of catholic truth. There is a class of views of Christianity and the Church which has exercised a stupendous influence upon Christian history, and is exceedingly prominent in our own Church at the present day. It is designated, somewhat according to the various stages of its development, as the High-Church, Sacramentarian, Tractarian, and Ritualistic school. I am to speak frankly of its dangerous influence and candidly of the service which it has rendered to our common Christianity. The deep-seated evil which so largely pervades this school is its idea of the ministry as related to God and man. It is not the idea of a historic church and a transmission of orders, from the apostles' time to the present hour, or even of the exclusive validity of an episcopally constituted ministry. The former idea is held by many Low-Churchmen, the latter by many High-Churchmen, who go no further than that. But the idea to which I refer is the sacerdotal—the idea that the ministry of the Gospel is a true and proper priesthood for the performance of essentially mediatorial acts

between man and God. In this I find great peril to the Church to day. I can not express the apprehensions which I have in regard to its influence in our beloved Church, or the importance of a vigorous development of opposite influences and tendencies. But I turn from what I regard as its false and dangerous character to that inestimable service which this school does render to the truth, by the firmness with which it holds—whatever else it loses — the fundamental facts and ideas of historic Christianity. And here I refer especially to the sacrificial character of the death of Christ. I find its theology pervaded with the sacrificial idea. In the fellowship of this truth I can follow, even beyond the boundaries of our Protestant Church, the sad footsteps of John Henry Newman and Frederic W. Faber. While amazed, and stricken in heart by the perversions by which I am thus surrounded, I seem, for the moment at least, to see every corruption made sweet by the sprinkling of the precious blood of the Lamb of God, and every dark place illumined by the light of the cross.

The ecclesiasticism and sacerdotalism of this

school are more or less restrained by the Broad-Church tendency, just as the latter is qualified and kept back from a fatal rationalism, in large measure, by the former. But both need a still more powerful and purifying influence, and that I find in evangelical truth.

I am very far from claiming that evangelical truth and feeling are found only in the school to which I now refer ; but to me it has always seemed that they were most prominent among those who are known as the Low-Church or Evangelical party. Therefore it is that, although holding views of the sacraments which very few of them would accept, and of the historic character of the institution of the ministry which some at least of them, would probably hesitate to avow, I cannot but say that my sympathies are chiefly with them, for they hold most dear that which I believe to be at the very centre of the Gospel of Christ. I know that the evangelical system, in the hands of fallible men, is attended with many and great dangers. Its indifference to the external and formal leads sometimes to the undervaluing of historic institutions, and of the body, so to speak,

of Christianity. Its dependence upon the teaching of the Holy Spirit is sometimes accompanied by a confounding of the impulses and conclusions of the individual with the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Its strong, high view of the relation of Christ to the believer, and the substitution of the one for the other, sometimes leads to such an identification in idea of the two that the believer comes to regard himself, not only as forgiven and accepted, but as sinless in Christ. This system needs free inquiry and investigation, untrammeled by prejudice and accepted interpretation. It needs the influence of the great institutional character of the Church to save it from mere individualism. What is there in it, then, that constitutes its inestimable value? It is this: It tells me, and thus interprets the deepest wants and most ardent longings of my spirit, that when my soul understands that Christ is a Saviour from sin, and rests on him for salvation, I am saved. I may have been under a gracious covenant before, which has sheltered my infancy and early youth, or I may have never received the sign of the covenant, and been a wanderer all my

days from God, but this trust in Christ has made me now, once for all, a child of God. There are no progressive steps in the acceptance of my trusting soul and the forgiveness of my sins. The progress is all in me, in my life of love. Sinful though I am, I am forgiven and pressed to the very heart of God. I have a power in the consciousness of this which moves me, as nothing else could, to a consecration of myself, body, soul, and spirit, to the Saviour. I find here the "power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth."

This is the central point of the evangelical system. There is a legal Christianity — legal, but Christianity still. With it pardon and acceptance are progressive and dependent upon Christian living. Religion is, under such a system, oftentimes a matter of most intense earnestness. I wonder at the holy lives which are led by those who are toiling after the peace of assured acceptance with God. But it is hard work. It is unnecessary bondage. It is a failure to avail ourselves of the boundless love and grace of the Saviour. The Gospel is good news

pre-eminently because it first says, "Go in peace," and then, "Sin no more."

We have thus considered the mutual relations of various parties or schools in the Protestant Episcopal Church. I have endeavored to deal justly with all, and to acknowledge the respects in which the Church is indebted to all. At the same time I have frankly avowed where my own sympathies chiefly lie. Those sympathies are determined not so much by objections to what are commonly called Church principles, as to the prominence which they are sometimes made to assume in the Christian system. I am aware that Low-Church principles, as well as High-Church principles, may be made to stand in the place of the most important and precious spiritual truths. One class of these principles has no more business in such a place than another. The importance of every such principle is to be determined simply by the prominence which it affords to the central, saving truth of the Gospel. Like a mountain range, in which summit after summit, rising higher and higher in the clouds, prepares us for the central peak, which towers majestically above them all, these vari-

ous principles and truths concerning the Church are helpful to the soul only when they are kept in due subordination, and lead on to that inner and higher circle of truth which surrounds the transcendently glorious person of Christ.

In this view of the Church, as a higher form of the Family and the State, I have represented it as fixed and unchangeable in certain fundamental institutions and truths, but as plastic and capable of indefinite modification in whatever is necessary to adapt it to its mission from age to age. In the present state of things it would seem to be necessary, in order to the healthful activity of the Church, that there should be a free development of these various historical schools, each being qualified and restrained by the others. But if there is to be this freedom of development, then manifestly whatever is of merely human origin and authority in the Church may be subject to modification, under the pressure of some manifest necessity or indisputable expediency. And even within the range of accepted and authoritative formularies, there must be large room for the free play of in-

dividual opinion and conscientious conviction. We are to remember also that no age has a monopoly of authority in regard to the institutions or the faith of the Church. While certain periods in history have doubtless occupied a peculiarly advantageous position for testifying to that which is divine and essential in the Church, and also for establishing its formularies and various human appliances, yet upon each age, after all, the responsibility must rest, of deciding what is permanent and what is transient in that which it has inherited from the past.

I am not insensible to the difficulties and dangers to which this idea of life and movement, largely unrestrained, in the Church might lead. It may be said that it gives free play to error. So it does, within certain limits, so far as repression by ecclesiastical discipline is concerned. But notice that it is not toleration of error which I advocate. The question is simply, what is the best method of restraining and suppressing it? And I maintain that it is more effectually restrained and suppressed by the moral power of the truth than by any possible

ecclesiastical machinery. Setting out of the account now such ecclesiastical proceedings as are, unfortunately, sometimes necessary for immoralities or acts intentionally hostile to the Church, though committed under cover of allegiance to it, it seems to me exceedingly desirable to limit, as far as possible, the number of offences which can be committed against the discipline or the faith of the Church. A canonical system, very simple and general in its character, would seem to be one of the best methods, not only of cultivating a sense of personal responsibility and honor among the clergy, but of avoiding the needless vexations which attend ecclesiastical proceedings upon points which involve very little, if any thing, of a moral character. The whole drift of what has been said would of course be adverse to any such proceedings in regard to questions of doctrine or practice which have been controverted points between historical schools in the Church. So far as questions of ecclesiastical practices are concerned, they may, as a general rule, be left safely to the paternal influence of the bishop in the Protestant Episcopal Church, except where

they are indisputably anti-Protestant, on the one hand, or anti-Episcopal, on the other. And as to questions of doctrine, all experience would lead us to great caution in the use of ecclesiastical discipline, except in cases of denial of some article of the primitive and universal creeds.

In connection with this consideration of the development of the Church by means of antagonistic schools of opinion, it would be well, if there were time, to consider the correlative law by which the reconciliation of antagonisms is effected. But that is a view of the subject which cannot now be pursued. It is sufficient to say that there is manifestly a conservative law in the Church, as there is in society, by which, after reaching a certain point of divergence, different schools of opinion begin to approach each other. We speak of this as a law. It is a law, but only as every method of divine operation is a law. For here we recognize, amid all diversities, the influence of that Holy Spirit which "maketh men to be of one mind in a house," and under whose guidance, through all the strange vicissitudes of the Christian dispen-

sation, there shall at last be a Church which is *high* in its historical character, and the traditional system which shall have brought down to the remotest period "the faith once delivered to the saints"; *broad* in its grand catholicity and its grateful appropriation of the best fruits of science and culture; and *evangelical* in the joyful consciousness of a present and completed redemption, and in acts of glad obedience to him who hath made all nigh unto God by the blood of his cross.

I cannot understand how any student of the history of the Church can doubt that there is a divine power back of all the phenomena which are presented, and overruling all for the accomplishing of this consummation. That divine power is the presence of Christ, walking ever among the golden candlesticks. There is no meaning in these phenomena of the history of the Church, or power in its services and sacraments, unless they are luminous with the light of the Saviour's presence. To one who stands in some cathedral, in the twilight hour, the great windows present only strangely confused forms and lustreless colors, and it is not until

the sun rises upon them, and floods them with its beams, that saints and apostles stand forth in their holy beauty, and the symbolized facts of the Gospel dawn upon the soul. And so the whole visible organism of the Church presents but a cold and meaningless aspect when the light of the Saviour's presence cannot be discerned. But when, behind the whole, the Sun of Righteousness moves in the glory which no man can approach unto, then it is all instinct with divine significance, and radiant with gleams of the beauty of that land which is still afar off.

The subject which we have been considering brings us under the influence of all those inspiring and hallowed associations which surround the State and the Family, intensified and spiritualized in the higher sphere to which they are now applied. We are stirred by a patriotic spirit, but its object is the city of God. We are moved with filial and fraternal affections, but the sphere in which they belong is the family of him who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. No more tender influences could be conceived of than those which in these relations

move us to love and honor one for another, and devotion to our common Lord and Master. Under the inspiration of these feelings we shall labor with a high and noble enthusiasm for Christ. We shall see one evil after another disappear. The dark temples of superstition and idolatry will be overthrown, and the holy temple of our God be everywhere built up. Upon the bells which proclaim the joyful news to the listening nations shall be inscribed "Holiness to the Lord"; and as their glad music thrills the sky, we may exclaim, with assured confidence of the speedy advent of the day when the "kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ,"

"Ring out a slowly dying cause
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

"Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be!"

THE CHURCH'S MISSION OF RECONCILIATION.

I SHOULD show but a poor appreciation of the privilege of addressing so many of my brethren of the clergy did I not endeavor to say something which may be helpful and encouraging to us in our special work. In seeking to do this, my thoughts have been guided by that wonderful declaration of St. Paul which is found in 2 Cor. 5 : 18—"HE HATH COMMITTED TO US THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION."

If in the treatment of the subject I shall speak of reconciliations in the kingdom of Christ other than the first great reconciliation of the soul to God, it is certainly not because I fail to realize the transcendent importance of that the primary aspect of the subject, but be-

cause through these other reconciliations, of which I shall speak, there is present always the underlying idea of reconciliation to God.

I cannot resist the conviction that a special mission of reconciliation now presents itself to the PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH. This conviction is the result of a consideration of certain peculiarities of our own time, and of the attitude in regard to them which this Church is capable of assuming. These peculiarities it is not difficult to recognize. They are for the most part the results of a transition in society from an old to a new order of things. At no period in the history of the world has there been so eager and persistent a questioning of every thing that claims authority over the human mind, and such restlessness under established institutions. The process so far has been chiefly disintegrating and destructive. The great conservative and constructive forces upon which the welfare of society depends have not yet specially asserted themselves. To the mind which has well considered the divine purpose as it has

unfolded itself in history there are openings in the clouds through which we can catch glimpses of the light of the coming order and peace ; there are many voices which promise the final reconciliation of the antagonisms which now disquiet the world. But the prevailing aspect is that of confusion, uncertainty, and doubt ; and venerable institutions of Church and State, and old opinions and philosophies, and ancient modes of faith, seem to be shaken to their very foundations.

It is impossible that this state of things can long continue. The human mind very soon rebels against a mere negative condition ; and positive institutions and beliefs, of some kind, are sure to emerge from the present dreary waste. The problem which presents itself, and is sure to be more or less satisfactorily solved, is to discriminate between what is transient and what is permanent in human life and society ; to determine what can safely be thrown aside as dangerous or obsolete, and what must be retained as essential ; what are the mere fleeting prejudices of mankind, and

what are, if there are any such, immutable and eternal truths.

In order to a satisfactory solution of this problem there must be a reconciliation of various antagonistic elements in society. In considering the mission of our own Church in regard to this work of reconciliation, we are left to inquire:

I. What Christian Church stands in the most favorable position for this work?

II. How can men alienated from Christianity by speculative difficulties be reconciled to the Church?

III. Upon what principles can a reconciliation of various Christian bodies be brought about?

IV. How can the antagonisms in our own Church best be reconciled?

I. There is a phenomenon, in our time, which is well worthy of our consideration, and that is a tendency to a return to the Church of Rome. I do not now refer to the Tractarian and Rit-

ualistic movement, however much that may have brought about a different feeling in regard to some of the peculiarities of that Church. I refer now to a sympathy which is springing up for the Church of Rome in quarters where perhaps it would least be expected, and where its existence is of very great significance. No one can have failed to notice the altered tone, of late years, in regard to this subject. The bitterness of earlier controversies seems in a great measure to have passed away. Educated men generally are inclined to admit that the Church of Rome has played an important part in history, in the preservation of civilization and in the maintenance of a spiritual order in society. Political considerations, especially in Germany, are bringing about a different attitude toward the Papacy. Prince Bismarck seeks the alliance of his old enemies against new and more dangerous foes. The policy of Leo XIII. seems to be likely to be conciliatory, and to adapt itself to some of the most deeply-felt wants of the age. There are many men who are tired of mere individualism, are op-

pressed with the confusion in which free inquiry has resulted, and, in the reaction which has followed, long for some venerable authority to which they can submit themselves. In this state of mind they welcome the most astounding claims of the Church of Rome. If science has driven them, as they think, to a doubt of immortality and a denial of the possibility of knowledge of God, then, in despair of finding a religion which can be reconciled with reason, they embrace one which proudly sets reason at defiance. And, more than this, there are timid men, in all our churches, who, distrusting their own conclusions and alarmed at the confusion which prevails, are glad to recognize a great institution which claims to think for them, and demands of them only that they shall believe and obey. Various influences combine to give strength to a movement which tends toward authority, unity, and positiveness in religious institutions. The certain end of such a movement, unless it can find itself elsewhere satisfied, is in the Church of Rome.

What is needed, in order to meet most beneficently the peculiar wants of the present day, is the authority which belongs to catholic truth and historical continuity in an institution which is in sympathy with freedom and progress; which encourages scientific inquiry; which recognizes the right and responsibility of private judgment; and which testifies, with no doubtful voice, to the fundamental truths of a personal God, a divine and redeeming Christ, and a personal immortality for man.

It is a principle common to all forms of Christianity, outside of the Church of Rome, that there is not, and cannot be, any visible head of the Church on earth. The idea, therefore, of an universal empire, with any one on earth representing the headship of Christ, is that very feature of the Papal system which all the rest of Christendom rejects. The reconciliation of the non-Christian elements in society to Christianity, and of the Christian elements into a new unity, would naturally, therefore, take form in national churches, with a com-

mon faith and rites of worship, and in communion with each other.

One of the most striking features in the history of Christianity has been the existence of national establishments, constituted by a union of Church and State. The tendency in our own time is strongly in the direction of disestablishment and the independence of all relations of the State on the one hand, and the Church on the other. Whether this is to be a permanent tendency, or whether it is altogether a salutary one, may be a question. There are many indications that the tendency may be indefinitely resisted by the Church of England. And when we remember the grand history of that institution, and see how it has its roots everywhere in the social and domestic life of the people, and how beneficently it is now gathering all the best interests of the nation under its protecting shade, we cannot regard its preservation as a national establishment otherwise than with gratitude and joy. But where established churches do not exist, there is no present prospect that they ever will

exist. Relations which were formerly compulsory are more and more becoming voluntary, and churches in the future, if they are to become in any sense national, must become so because they are the best expression of the religious life of the nation, and are accepted by the people as such.

I am proceeding on the supposition that the mission of reconciliation cannot be satisfactorily accomplished—that is, that modern thought and progress cannot be reconciled with Christianity, and different forms of Christianity cannot be reconciled with each other, unless our Protestant Christendom is unified upon the basis of the historic faith, and organized into institutions which, in the sense already laid down, shall be National Churches.

It is vain to say that the same power can be secured and the same desirable results accomplished by the co-existence of various societies, independent of each other, and each claiming to present some special aspect of Christianity. When we consider what the religion of Christ is, the attitude of these various

Christian bodies toward each other presents a deplorable spectacle. The work of the Church of Christ in the world is carried on at the most tremendous disadvantage and with the most needless sacrifice of influence and means. It is probably no exaggeration to say that as much of the energy of Christian men is absorbed in attacking other forms of Christianity and defending their own as in efforts for the conversion of the world. It is time that this condition of things should come to an end, and that men should labor for some form of Christianity which shall win to itself the allegiance of Christian people, and become, not by civil compulsion, but by voluntary acceptance, the Church of the nation.

The highest ideal of the Church of the future is, of course, the manifestation to the world of the organic unity of all Christian people. When we speak of "organic unity" we mean, of course, the unity which belongs to and is manifested by a body animated by one vitalizing principle. This is true, to some extent, of the Church regarded as the "blessed

company of all faithful people." But this unity is comparatively powerless because there is little consciousness of it in the body itself, and because there is almost an entire absence of any external manifestation. This divided and segregated state, in which there is so little consciousness or manifestation of unity, is the result of wrong opinions, wrong feelings, and lack of spiritual directness and power. It has been profoundly said that "vice separates men, while virtue unites them," and it is the "vice" of the Christian community—that is, the defective moral and spiritual sense—which keeps the faithful in Christ Jesus from the aspiration and realization of unity.

I have said that this organic unity of all Christian people is the highest ideal of the Church of the future. The full realization of this in the sense of any manifestation of unity, including all the great branches into which Christendom is divided, is so remote from any present indications as hardly to encourage any practical effort. But the opportunity certainly lies open to us to labor for reconcilia-

tion and unity, with confident hopes of success, within certain limits, and in certain relations which we are abundantly able to reach and affect. It may be well at the same time to remember that the larger realization of an all-embracing unity has been regarded by some of the profoundest thinkers of this century as something to be directly labored for, and the Anglican Church as the great agency by which it is to be accomplished. Most remarkable in this respect is the testimony of Count Joseph de Maistre, one of the most celebrated writers of the ultramontane school in the Church of Rome. Notwithstanding the natural prejudices of his ecclesiastical position, he says, in his "Considerations sur la France," that if Christians are to be drawn together it would seem that the impulse must proceed from the Church of England.* With such a testi-

* "Si jamais les Chrétiens se rapprochent, comme tout les y invite, il semble que la motion doit partir de l'église d'Angleterre. Le presbytérienisme fut une œuvre française, et par conséquent une œuvre exagerée. Nous sommes trop éloignés des sectateurs d'un culte trop peu substantiel ; il n'y a pas moyen de nous entendre. Mais

mony, from such a source, it may not be unsuitable for us to feel that there is confided to the Protestant Episcopal Church, which has the same faith and order as the Church of England, a special mission of reconciliation in our own land, and a special agency in the building up of the future Church of the nation.

II. An important aspect of this work of reconciliation is suggested by the alienation of many intellectual and educated men from Christianity. Very much that might be said on this point would apply to the whole Christian body as well as to any one particular Church, but there are certain respects in which I think our own Church will be seen to

l'église anglicane, qui nous touche d'une main, touche de l'autre ceux que nous ne pouvons toucher ; et quoique, sous un certain point de vue, elle soit en butte aux coups des deux partis, et qu'elle presente le spectacle un peu ridicule d'un révolté qui prêche l'obéissance, cependant elle est très precieuse sous d'autres aspects, et peut être considérée comme un de ces intermèdes chimiques, capables de rapprocher des élémens inassociables de leur nature."

Considérations sur La France, Par M. Le Cte. Jph. De Maistre.

possess special advantages for the discharge of this mission.

It is undoubtedly true that there are many minds, at the present day, alienated from Christianity, not from aversion to its moral or spiritual principles, but on account of certain intellectual difficulties with which it is embarrassed. One of these difficulties which is most widely felt and most injurious in its results is that which arises from the supposed impossibility of verifying those facts which lie at the foundation of Christianity, such as the being of a personal God, the supernatural character of redemption in Christ, and the personal immortality of man. Modern habits in the investigation of truth; the employment of the inductive method; the invariable use of verification in scientific inquiry, have led to the denial of the character of knowledge to any conclusions except those to which these methods have led. As a natural consequence men will say: 'All this that you claim in regard to religion may be true. It is impossible, perhaps, to disprove it, but, on the other hand, it

is impossible to prove it, and we cannot be asked to assert our belief in regard to a subject of which we have no knowledge, and are incompetent, therefore, either to affirm or deny.' This agnosticism, this denial of the possibility of any knowledge of the infinite and the absolute, stands, therefore, an apparently insuperable barrier to the simplest and most fundamental conceptions in religion.

The removal of this difficulty, and the reconciliation of such men to Christianity, must be accomplished by different methods from those too often employed. To meet this agnosticism by fierce denunciation and a denial to it of any rational or legitimate character, to treat those who avow it as if they were morally bad as well as intellectually astray, is a mistake of the most dangerous character. There is a certain truth in this position, which, if we are bold and honest, we shall not fail to recognize. To recognize it boldly and honestly is the first step toward the removal of the difficulty by which it is attended.

Suppose, then, that we have recognized the

value of the scientific method, and admitted that the purely intellectual processes by which it is sought to establish the fundamental principles of religion are not followed by the same kind of assurance that attends a result in the physical sciences reached by the inductive method. Suppose, further, that we have admitted that, until some satisfactory method for the removal of the difficulty is pointed out, the agnostic position does not seem to be altogether irrational. We are then prepared to take a ground where we can secure for religion all the certitude to be desired, and from which it is impossible that we can be dislodged.

For when we have admitted all this, which we are honestly bound to admit, we can assert, without fear of reasonable denial, that certitude is possible in regard to certain matters where verification is impossible; that in certain respects where we cannot verify we are bound to believe, and that the fundamental principles of religion are of this character. Take, for instance, our certitude in regard to the actual existence of a past, such as we re-

member it, or as it has been certified to us by the memory of others. This is a conclusion which has not been reached by the inductive method. It is not susceptible of verification, and yet we are compelled to believe it by the very structure of our minds. The same is true of the fact of our personal identity and of the continuity of nature. A certainty which excludes the possibility of doubt is not attainable even by the scientific method. It is simply a conviction engendered by a very high degree of probability. Just such a sort of probability attaches itself to the fundamental principles of religion. The universal tendency of the mind to believe in these invests them with a very high degree of probability. But then, further than this, the testimony of certain faculties of our nature, which are most valuable in the search after this class of truths, contributes to the certitude we seek. The moral sense, which is a fact as much as any other, demands this result, and those affections which the moral sense declares to be the best and noblest element in us, when allowed

to exercise their influence upon the mind, lead to these fundamental principles of religion.

This brings us to a point of great practical importance in the consideration of this subject. We have found that there is a kind of certitude which is intuitive in its character. We intuitively believe in the reality of our past, in our personal identity at different times, and in the continuity of nature. We have similar intuitions in regard to the fundamental principles of religion, but with this difference, that in the case of religion there is the added testimony of the moral state and the affections. Thus the existence of a personal God, with the attribute of infinite goodness, is probably not susceptible of proof by the scientific method ; but we have an intuitive conviction of its truth, and in a state of the affections which the moral sense pronounces to be good, we believe it as a matter of course.

This ministry of the affections, in the search for truth, has deeply impressed the minds of the profoundest philosophers. Pascal has beautifully said :

"Divine things are infinitely above nature, and God only can place them in the soul. He has designed that they should pass from the heart into the head, and not from the head into the heart, and so as it is necessary to know human things in order to love them, it is necessary to love divine things in order to know them."

The same truth has been gracefully expressed by the present Archbishop of Dublin, when he says,

"To halls of heavenly truth admission wouldst thou win?
Oft knowledge stands without, while love may enter in."

These ideas, I am aware, have given rise, in some cases, to an extravagant mystical theology, but, foreign as the whole system of mysticism is to our present mode of thinking, there is good reason to believe that the mystical apprehension of truth is an essential element in a complete system of philosophy, and that, while a theology founded merely upon intellect and logic, or merely upon feeling and intuition, will be defective, one that is wisely compounded of both elements will be symmetrical and complete in the harmony and fulness of truth.

We may depend upon it that this age, hard and materialistic as it is, is just in a condition to respond to this presentation of the ministry of the affections in the apprehension of truth. Frederick Robertson, with his acute sense of what is most profound in human nature, says that 'men find a relief from the materialism to which they feel themselves compelled in science, in the mystical element in the poetry of Tennyson and Browning.' Show men that there are paths of sentiment and affection which lead to heritages of truth, assured to them, by Catholic consent and tradition, as divinely communicated to the world, and many a choice spirit will be won from the darkness of doubt and unbelief, and reconciled to faith in God, in Christ, and the eternal life.

The attitude of the clergy in reference to the results of scientific inquiry is of very great importance in this connection. Men, for the most part, receive their impressions of Christianity from the representations of the clergy, and thus Christianity is oftentimes held responsible for the misapprehensions of its advo-

cates. The clergy, as a class, are exceedingly averse to any modifications of their views of truth, not unnaturally, perhaps, confounding their views of truth with truth itself. It is too often forgotten that theology is a progressive science ; that while there is no change in the facts upon which it is based, there is a very great change in the mode in which those facts are apprehended and expressed. One of the principal agencies by which this modification and change are brought about is scientific investigation, and its result in a knowledge of the works of God. This knowledge renders certain theological views, which formerly were held, without disquietude, absolutely unendurable. Happily the dogmatic statements of the Church, which are to be regarded as practically unchangeable, are very few, and relate only to the fundamental facts of the Christian religion. All doctrinal statements outside of the doctrinal basis of the Church, however logically they may seem to be deduced from it, are properly liable to modification in each age. The discoveries which each generation

makes as to the facts and laws of nature, the more thorough knowledge of history, the study of comparative philology and theology, all furnish us with keys to various treasure-houses of divine truth. They open to us new revelations of the being and attributes of God. The recognition of this, and an attitude of encouragement toward the freest scientific inquiry, would do much to remove those prejudices of scientific men toward Christianity which are the result of the prejudices of Christian men against science.

I feel no hesitation in urging, in the interest of Christianity, the encouragement of the freest scientific inquiry. No scientific conclusions, be they true or false, so long as they are confined within the admitted sphere of science, can impugn any statement of the universal creeds. When the man of science says that he studies nature without any preconceived ideas of how it came to exist, or what is its purpose, if it has any purpose, we say, 'Very well, we are satisfied with that. All that we ask is that you shall give us the results of your

observation, and the benefit of your experience in the co-ordination of facts.' When he says further, 'I find in matter all the promise and potency of life,' we are very far from being alarmed as if he had discovered that the idea of God might now be dispensed with. We do not need to ask, for every mind will ask for itself, How did there come to be there this promise and potency of life? He may go on and say, 'I find nothing else there.' 'Very well,' we reply; 'what did you expect to find, or what do you suppose we expected you to find? You do not think, do you, that we are disappointed because you did not find God there? Do you not know that it is a fundamental principle in Christian philosophy that you will not find God in any or all phenomena of the natural world? Go to the full extent of your scientific methods, they will not lead you out of nature into the spiritual and infinite world. Affirm this to your heart's content, and we will re-echo your affirmation. But if you go further and say that the scientific method is the only one which leads to knowl-

edge and truth, and since it does not disclose God, therefore there is no God, or, at all events, it is impossible for us to know that there is, then we reply, Now you have gone beyond the sphere of science, and have entered a domain which is not peculiarly your own. We have gone with you through all your scientific investigations. We are ready to admit all your conclusions. We do not care how great are the modifications which it may oblige us to make in our doctrinal views of any thing within the sphere of nature. But you have gone as far with the scientific method as it is possible for you to go. Now listen for a moment while we venture to speak of that which is inscrutable in and through nature. You have taught us wonderful truths about nature. You have not only made us understand better its marvellous beauty, but you have shown us that it is the embodiment of types, ideas, and orderly progression. We have learned of you that it is "saturated with thought," and answers strangely to powers of perception and classification in ourselves.

Now is it not reasonable to admit that this constitution of nature gives probability to that conviction of which the human mind has in some way possessed itself, that there is an infinite mind of which nature is the manifestation? Are there not universal beliefs and aspirations which in this way find a rational explanation? Does it not enable you to give a more probable account than otherwise of conscience and the moral sense; and, as what we claim to be the facts of redemption present themselves side by side with the admitted facts of consciousness and experience, is there not such a satisfactory completeness and symmetry in the whole theory of nature and life, thus elaborated, as to make it a guiding principle of our being?'

A more wise and just attitude toward scientific theories which seem to militate against certain supposed truths of revelation would do much toward reconciling men of science with the Christian faith. These theories are, some at least of them, rapidly passing into universally accepted statements of facts. It would

be well to remember that Christian men have had cause enough to regret their hasty opposition to theories which they have supposed to be irreconcilable with revelation, but which they have subsequently been compelled to admit to be true. This has been the case conspicuously with astronomy and geology, and the result has been a more rational theism. It would not be any stranger if some theory of evolution, toward which scientific investigation is at present so persistently tending, should be finally established, and as a result nature should come to be regarded, not as proceeding from isolated creative acts, but as the product of an uninterrupted and all-pervading divine process and agency. The effect, instead of being to remove God, in our idea of him, further from nature, would be to bring him nearer to our wondering apprehension and awe.

These thoughts in regard to the reconciliation of science to Christianity lead to a grand and most encouraging view of the ministry of science in God's providential government of

the world. Men who devote themselves to the study of nature are laying broad and deep foundations for a structure the form and purpose of which, for the most part, they little understand. Upon these foundations they are rearing walls with giant piers and buttresses. Within are innumerable fair and majestic forms, flooded with unimaginable splendors of light. But here is a magnificent structure which it is impossible for them to finish. The crowning glory must come from other hands. It is the power of Christ alone which shall lift a Pantheon into the sky as the fitting dome of a structure made sacred by the works and word of God. For it is true of this structure also, that it is Christ "in whom the whole building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."

III. One of the most important problems of reconciliation that presents itself to our Church in this day is that which is involved in the relations we sustain to other Christian bodies outside of the Church of Rome. These bodies, for the most part, trace their history as or-

ganized institutions back to the period of the Reformation, some of them claiming to have existed in more or less distinct form since the Apostolic age. Without stopping now to consider the question whether episcopacy is essential to the being of a Church, it may be well for us, at the outset, to recognize the fact that there are Christian communions with whom we stand in very close relations, who are to be regarded as holding essentially the doctrines of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, as having the sacraments in their essential features, as retaining something at least of the original organization and government of the Church, and as exhibiting their Christian faith in lives of devotion and works of charity. There are many, no doubt, who hold that the differences between these Christian bodies and our own Church are of minor importance, and there are others who exaggerate these differences, and regard them as making the line of division between that which possesses and that which is destitute of the essential elements of the Church. There are, however, many very

thoughtful men in our time—and among them the well-known Dr. Goulburn, Dean of Norwich, who has presented his views very forcibly in his book on the Holy Catholic Church—who hold that whatever may be the defects of organization in those Christian bodies, which retain substantially the Nicene faith, they are to be regarded as having acquired legitimacy by existing for so long a period, and as constituting, therefore, integral parts of the Christian commonwealth.

There are also, among us, those who believe strongly in the dependence of Christian life upon the sacraments and ordinances of the Church, and who therefore, from the admitted piety prevailing in these Christian bodies, infer the possession on their part of legitimate rites and ordinances. This is a position which combines high sacramentarian views with broad views of the ministry and the Church.

It should be remembered that, whatever may be the exclusive views of individuals, the churches of the Anglican communion have never restrained liberty of opinion within the

limits here indicated. No one view or doctrine, therefore, in regard to this subject can be imposed as obligatory upon the member of the Church.

Amid this allowable diversity of opinion, for which we have reason to be devoutly thankful, it may perhaps be found that there are more possibilities of unity of feeling and action than we have been accustomed to suppose. It is certainly desirable, at all events, that there should be a careful reconsideration of all the bearings of our attitude in regard to this subject.

If it is simply a question of the unconditional surrender of all these Christian bodies and the adoption of the institutions of the Church as we have received it; if these societies are utterly without legitimacy, and have nothing which they can usefully contribute to the Church of the future, then it necessarily follows that there is no attitude possible for us but that of unqualified hostility, united with the astounding claim, on our part, that instead of being simply one of the fragments (perhaps

the nearest to the original type), into which our common Christianity has been unhappily divided, we alone are the representatives of the Church of Christ in this land, and upon us the whole responsibility of Christian institutions rests. For it will hardly be claimed that we share this representative position and responsibility with the Church of Rome in a sense in which we do not share them with other Christian bodies. The claim that the Church of Rome stands in any closer relations to us than orthodox Protestant churches is fatal to our own position as a Church. It yields so much to Rome that it takes away from us all justification for separate existence. If then we claim a right to exist independently of Rome, and yet share no representative position and responsibility with any of the Protestant churches, we do assert for ourselves the prerogative, and assume for ourselves the tremendous obligations of being the only Church of Christ in this land. It is not too much to say that any theory must be fatally defective which leads to so preposterous a conclusion.

In avoiding such a conclusion we shall find that there is very important common ground upon which we, with the non-Episcopal churches, can stand. The pressure of the Church of Rome upon modern society will make a closer union among Christians not within its pale imperatively necessary. It is time that we carefully considered, not so much the points in which we differ as those in which we agree. Especially is it desirable that we should ascertain the original points of divergence, and what elements of the original Church have been carried on in the various forms into which it has been divided. It is the wise advice of Lord Bacon, in regard to the reformation of Church or State, to revert to their original institution and see wherein they have departed from the fundamental principles of their organization. This method of reform in the Church is historical, and regards the Church as an organization, with the germs of its future development present in it from the first. Its true growth must therefore be in the direction of germinal development.

Its whole past must be carried forward into its future.

The present embarrassments which stand in the way of the organic unity of the Church consist mainly in the existence of several ecclesiastical polities, supposed to be antagonistic to each other. These polities are, in general terms, the Congregational, the Presbyterian, and the Episcopal. In examining the essential peculiarities of these polities, we shall find that they all existed contemporaneously in the early Church. The fundamental principle of Congregationalism is the independence of the Church in a particular place, the right of believers, in a town or city, which was the original parish or diocese, to regulate their own worship and administer their own affairs. This was certainly true of the original diocese in the primitive Church. The fundamental principle of Presbyterianism is the parity of the presbytery, but it is a parity which admits, in its original idea, of a *primus inter pares*, which approaches very closely to the idea of episcopacy, and many, not only in the Church

of England but in the Church of Rome, have held that a bishop does not belong to a different order, but simply holds a higher office than his brother presbyters in the Church. The essential element in episcopacy is the office of a bishop, succeeding to that office by an unbroken succession, to whom is committed the general superintendence of the diocese over which he presides, and to whom certain functions exclusively belong.

Now suppose, and the supposition is made, not because it suggests any thing which may be practicable or desirable, at present, but simply in order to show what common elements there are in these various organizations—suppose, I say, that the modern diocese should come to be reduced to the primitive model, and comprise only the Church in a single city and its suburbs; suppose the principle of a larger diocesan independence were recognized; suppose that one among the presbyters were set apart for life, in conformity to a law of succession, to a particular office of superintendence, we should have a Church episcopal in

its polity, and yet comprising the essential elements of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism. The old catholicity of organism would be restored.

Without urging this point beyond a mere suggestion of these common features of organization, I wish to say a word in regard to a matter which is of very great importance to us and to the non-Episcopal churches. I refer to the widening chasm, in our modern times, between the State and the Church. This tendency is fast rendering a Christian State, as such, impossible. It has originated, in great measure, in the fact that the Church, in our time, is, as a unit, invisible. It is a body the outlines of which are indefinite. It is wanting in organization. It can come into no relations, as an organism, with civil society. In the present imperfect catholicity of the Church it is impossible for the State to enter into relations with it. They would be relations merely with some fragments or one-sided developments of Christianity. It is not so much hostility on the part of the State to the Church

which is leading everywhere to a separation between the two as the difficulty of ascertaining what is the common, universal Christianity, what is the Catholic Church.

Until there is the development of a higher catholicity this tendency is inevitable. It will, in all probability, proceed in our own country and the other countries of Christendom, until every tie of union between the State and ecclesiastical organizations is sundered. The Christian State as such will have disappeared. It is to little, if any, purpose that we resist this tendency. In the present condition of the Christian Church it would not be wise perhaps to endeavor to retain the institution of the Christian State. But the secularization of the State cannot certainly be the culmination of Christian civilization. Nay, rather out of the monstrous character of such a position, thus made evident, will come the cry for a catholicity broad enough for the State to stand upon. After the failures of "independent morality," and Christless philosophies, and Godless civilizations, we may perhaps make

real to ourselves that grand unity of which Plato dreamed in the "Republic," or that still vaster and grander conception of St. Augustine in the "City of God."

The question of present practical relations with the various non-Episcopal churches around us is one of very great importance, and not to be too hastily concluded. It may serve to guide us in the consideration of the question if we keep distinctly in mind what the end is which we wish to have accomplished. This end I hold unhesitatingly to be the restoration of organic unity. Whatever relations will tend to bring about this result upon the basis of the Catholic creeds and primitive order I believe to be precisely the relations most desirable for us to cultivate. Our view of the character of these relations may be somewhat modified if we consider them from a standing-point which we are not much accustomed to occupy, and ask not what we have to contribute to this organic union, but what these other Christian bodies have to contribute. We are sufficiently fa-

miliar with the advantages and excellences of our own system. We value very highly the historical character and unbroken continuance of the ministry of the Church from apostolic times. We attach great importance to the Church year, and to liturgical worship. The dogmatic basis of the Church, in the universal creeds, and the Church system of training, we believe to be of inestimable value in the development of Christian character. The comprehensiveness and catholicity of the Church make it in its very nature the rallying ground for all the followers of Christ. Now let us see what special gifts and graces there are in the non-Episcopal churches which they would be able to contribute to the Church of the future.

In the first place the numerical strength of these Christian bodies gives them very great importance and influence. For the most part great importance is attached among them to culture and learning among the clergy. We might naturally hesitate before entering into a comparison of our educational institutions with

theirs. They have covered the land with benevolent organizations, and their missionary operations are to be found in every part of the heathen world. They witness also for the most part to those features of Christianity which are of the most vital importance. They have blessed, and are blessing, the world with innumerable saintly lives. It would not be difficult perhaps to enlarge upon the weak points in these religious systems ; but that does not fall in with my present object, which is to dwell upon those points in which their accession would enrich the Church of the future.

What we need very much to cultivate is a generous appreciation of these excellences to which I have referred. We shall do well to seek and value the personal relations to which such appreciation would naturally lead. There is also a large field of charitable and even religious effort in which association with Christians of other churches would secure important results without any possible compromise of Church principles. The present Church law which forbids the participation, in any ser-

vice, in our congregations, of any persons who have not been episcopally ordained, or are not communicants of our Church, may be wise in view of all the circumstances involved. Before there was such a law, liberty of action in this matter was a liberty to be vindicated if assailed. The law, however, as it now is, must be loyally obeyed. In the consideration of this subject, however, it should always be remembered that the relations between non-Episcopal churches and our own are not embarrassed as they are in England by the fact that the Church is an institution of the State.

Probably not much more can be done at present in the direction of organic unity than to make our own Church more and more truly evangelical and catholic, and to promote among ourselves a more intelligent and generous estimate of those Christians from whom, for the time, we are separated. It may not be long before the dangers which threaten our common Christianity will become so formidable as to force us into closer relations and union. What may be accomplished in this respect by

a deeper sense than we now have of our underlying unity in Christ we cannot now tell. May He who "maketh men to be of one mind in a house" bring this union to pass in His own good time!

IV. In order that our Church may most wisely and efficiently aid in giving form to the future Church of the nation, it is necessary that a reconciling ministry should be accomplished within its own borders, and among the various schools of opinion which it contains. We cannot expect that others will be drawn into unity with us until we have learned to be a unity among ourselves. We must start in our consideration of this part of our subject with the fact clearly impressed upon our minds that there has been an historical development of widely differing schools of opinion in the Church of England and the churches with which it is in communion. At no time since the period of the Reformation has there been so wide a diversity in any one ecclesiastical organization. In those religious bodies even, in which there is supposed to be the largest free-

dom from authority, the limits of permissible belief are far more narrow than with us. This results from the fact that they avowedly exist for the purpose of exhibiting Christianity under some special type of it, and the presence, in such societies, of those to whom Christianity presents itself under another aspect, is not desired. To my mind this comprehensiveness is a great glory of the Church, and the recognition and acceptance of it is the first step toward the unity for which, in the midst of diversity, we are to seek.

This diversity and comprehensiveness of the Church, in which the early schools of Rome and Alexandria are recalled to our minds, does not arise from any preconceived plan for the development of the Church, but is the inevitable result of the circumstances in which the Church has been placed. It was inevitable that the spirit of the Roman Empire, to so many of the forms and to so much of the genius of which, the Church succeeded, should pass into the Christianity of modern times, and reveal itself in excess of dogma and organi-

zation. It was inevitable that the spirit of the Greek philosophy should characterize, in these latter days, a class of thinkers in the Church who would chafe under dogmatic authority, rebel against what they might regard as too rigid organization, and contend for freedom in subjecting both the Church and Revelation to the test of human reason. It was inevitable that there should be a class of men who, starting with supreme regard for the spiritual in Christianity, should attribute to the Scriptures, in their understanding of them, an authority which they deny to the Church, and accept the traditions of their own school as more to be valued than those which have the sanction of catholic consent. It is easy to see excellences in each of these schools. It is easy to see the perils to which the unrestrained development of any of them would lead. Let any one of them be separated from the restraining influences of the Church, and it would soon run into the most dangerous extremes.

Even within the Church, and under the restraining influence exercised by the presence

of other classes of opinion, each of these schools has, at least in the case of some of its members, and with threatening indication of wider defection, gone beyond the limits of the legitimate comprehensiveness of the Church, and transgressed the boundaries of evangelical and catholic truth. There is a latent source of error in the exclusive position of each, and it flows with ever-increasing volume through the logical processes by which the original position is developed. Each one, therefore, has in it an element of danger for the Church.

How shall they be restrained and these threatening dangers averted? is a question which has always been one of great importance; perhaps never of more importance than now. It is a vital question in connection with the subject we are considering.

The method which most naturally suggests itself, and which has been most frequently adopted, is that of repression by ecclesiastical authority. It is evidently within the legitimate province of the Church to protect itself from erroneous teaching. The only question

is by what means that protection can best be secured. Let it be by ecclesiastical authority, through pains and penalties, if that method, and that alone, can succeed. But when we remember that we are in the first place to be certain that the teaching which we propose to repress is erroneous, and, in the second, that our attempts to suppress it by force, if it be erroneous, may not succeed, we may well pause before we proceed in that direction. History teaches us a very important lesson in this respect, especially the history which this generation has been making. The effort which has been made in England to restrain, by legal proceedings, the excesses of each of these schools in turn has been attended only with failure, and the present agitation under the Public Worship Regulation Act is most disastrous in its effect upon the Church. The attempts of the same sort which have been made in the Church in this country have been no more encouraging.

It would seem, therefore, that even if such proceedings are right in theory they are not

practicable in the present state of public opinion. It is doubtful, however, whether they are even theoretically right, in connection with any opinions which, by a liberal construction, can be regarded as belonging to any one of these historical schools. It is not at all unlikely that the protection of the Church from false teaching may be found, after all, to depend largely upon the free development of these various schools. Each one is held back from excess by the restraining influence of the others. But if you suppress one, wholly or in part, you not only restrain the free development of the Church in that direction, but you give undue influence and power to opposing tendencies. Suffer all to work freely together, and each will prove a conservative power in the Church.

We may go farther even than this. Where we have reason to believe there is loyalty to Christ and to the Church, a man, so far from being restrained, is to be encouraged in the avowal of the opinions of any of these historical schools within the limits to which his loy-

alty will permit him to go. If he has no true loyalty to Christ or the Church, and is only making an hypocritical pretext of it, I know of no better protection for the Church than that which is to be found in the loss of influence and power by which such hypocrisy is sure to be attended. The bold and frank avowal of convictions in regard to this whole class of subjects is of immense importance to a rich and full development of the Church. It is repressed convictions, and utterances to which there is no corresponding belief, that degrade individual character and are fatal to any robust faith in the Church.

This strong avowal of personal conviction, which I claim should be encouraged rather than repressed, is perfectly consistent with the toleration, so far as compulsory measures are concerned, of opposing convictions. They may be tolerated so far as compulsion is concerned, while they are properly assailed by force of argument. They may be tolerated, if for no other reason than that they may in that way be the more readily restrained.

I plead for strong individual assertion of what seems to each man divine truth, and for generous toleration of similar assertion on the part of others. It is no compromise of what we believe to be truth that I advocate, but simply the according to others of what we feel to be so solemn a duty for ourselves. But there is a deeper reason still for this large and brotherly toleration. Our views of truth are very limited and partial, and while there are certain fundamental principles in regard to which we will not admit that there can be any reasonable doubt, we have reason to believe that there is a higher unity in which these apparently irreconcilable systems are found to enter harmoniously, each necessary to the completeness and symmetry of the whole.

When we have become familiar with one class of phenomena in the heavenly bodies, and learned the facts and laws, for instance, of the solar system, we are disturbed by revelations of nebulæ and binary stars. We should have expected simply the reproduction through space of what we have found so beautiful and

admirable in our own system. But the Maker of the universe has a higher and all-comprehending unity to which all these diversities are subordinated.

May it not be, after all, that the ultimate cause of all these diversities which now so greatly disturb us, and seem so inconsistent with unity, is to be found in the multitudinous aspects of the character and work of Christ? Here there has come to us a Divine Man, flooded with the glories of the infinite, the express image of God, and men gaze with dazzled vision at this marvellous revelation and then strive to utter what they have seen. No wonder that different aspects of the splendor have flashed upon different eyes; and since no man, nor all men, have witnessed and can testify to the whole glory of this revelation of God, no wonder that it is difficult now to blend all testimonies into one harmonious representation of what Christ is and what Christ has done. Let each man to whose longing gaze Christ has manifested himself say freely, though he may say with sad imperfection, just

what Christ, in that marvellous experience, seemed to him.

When it was the purpose of David to build a temple which should exceed all other structures, in stateliness and magnificence, he called upon the people to make their offerings for the erection of this House of the Lord. There were brought to the king, in vast abundance, silver and gold and brass and iron and cedar wood and hewn stones. When the building came to be erected, it rose, without noise of hammer, like "a majestic palm in the desert." We are called upon to bring our contributions to the building up of the great Church of the future, the visible organization of the redeeming work of Christ in our land. We are to bring to it the consecration of our lives, whatever of natural gifts of learning, or eloquence, or powers of administration, there may be among us. We are to bring to it the sacrifice of our prejudices, of our partisan spirit, of our unholy ambition. We are to bring to it glad and grateful recognition of all that others can bring. We are to bring to it

great heritages from the past which God has intrusted to our keeping, but more especially all we have of present devotion and grace. We are to bring to it our faith in God and Christ, our hope for the future of the world, our charity for all mankind. This great temple of the time to come will be built without the touch of human hand, by the power of the Holy Ghost. It will rise amid the surrounding darkness like a vast dome of light, as when northern fires flash suddenly and silently in countless spires through the heavens. Though radiant as the luminous sky, it shall be as firm and enduring as the everlasting rock. O grand and beautiful vision of prophecy, rise in all thy glorious reality upon the longing eyes of the children of God!

APPENDIX.

The Sermon on Charity and Truth, was requested for publication in the following letter :

Boston, April 14, 1859.

Rev. and Dear Brother : At our meeting to-day, in St. Paul's Lecture Room, it was unanimously voted by the clergy and laity present to ask of you a copy of your able and timely sermon, preached to-day at the ordination of Mr. Coolidge ; and the undersigned were appointed a committee to carry the resolution into effect.

By complying with the request you will not only greatly favor us personally, but also confer a large benefit upon the beloved Church of which we are members, and upon the Christian public, for whose best welfare we are bound to exert ourselves.

Your sincere friends and affectionate brethren in the ministry of the Gospel.

Samuel Fuller,
E. M. P. Wells,
E. L. Drown.

REPLY.

Boston, April 15, 1859.

Rev. and Dear Brethren : I have received your kind letter requesting a copy of my sermon for publication. I cannot well refuse a request the granting of

which is, in your opinion, likely to be productive of good.

I should have been glad to enlarge upon some of the points contained in the sermon ; but as you have, in a certain sense, endorsed it, by requesting its publication, I feel bound to publish it, if at all, just as it was delivered.

I am affectionately your friend and brother,

JOHN COTTON SMITH.

The REV. SAMUEL FULLER, D.D,
The REV. E. M. P. WELLS, D.D.,
The REV. E. L. DROWN.

The Sermon on The Liturgy as a Basis of Christian Union, was one of a Course delivered under the auspices of the Bible and Common Prayer Book Society, and afterwards published in a volume.

The Sermon on the Church's Law of Development, was requested in the following letter :

To the Rev. John Cotton Smith, D.D :

The undersigned members of the Convention of the Diocese of New York, having listened with great pleasure and satisfaction to your able and eloquent sermon preached at the opening services yesterday, desire that you would furnish them a copy of the same for publication, that their brethren in the Church at large may have

an opportunity of sharing in the pleasure and profit which they have experienced.

[SIGNED.]

THE RT. REV. HORATIO POTTER, D.D., D.C.L.

BENJAMIN I. HAIGHT,
MORGAN DIX,
ISAAC H. TUTTLE,
HENRY C. POTTER,
J. H. RYLANCE,
THOMAS GALLAUDET,
JAMES STARR CLARK,
J. TUTTLE SMITH,
SOLOMON G. HITCHCOCK,
JOSEPH I. BICKNELL,
BROCKHOLST MORGAN,
ROMAINE S. MANSFIELD,
GEORGE F. SEYMOUR,
F. S. FLEISCHHACKER,
J. EASTBURN BROWN,
ALBERT S. HULL,
CHARLES SEYMOUR,
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WILLIAM NETERS,
SAMUEL M. AKERLY,
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HENRY T. SATTERLEE,
JOHN P. LUNDY,
STEPHEN F. HOLMES,
FREDERICK OGILBY,
EDMUND GUILBERT,
F. B. VAN KLEECK,
EDWARD C. HOUGHTON,
L. BAILY,
A. F. OLMSTED,
GEORGE B. REESE,
GEORGE M. MILLER,
JAMES F. DEPEYSTER,
ERASTUS BROOKS,
GEORGE WELLER,
GEORGE DORSTER,
C. V. R. LUDINGTON,
W. M. POSTLETHWAITE,
CORNELIUS B. SMITH,
PHILANDER K. CADY,
FRANCIS HARISON,
CALEB CLAPP,
CHARLES B COFFIN,
JOHN F. POTTER,
JOHN W. KRAMER,
WM. W. MONTGOMERY,
A. W. SNYDER,
WALTER DELAFIELD,
R. F. CRARY,
C. T. WOODRUFF,
HIRAM ROOSA,
JAMES BYRON MURRAY,
FREDERICK SILL,
ARTHUR H. WARNER,
F. S. WINSTON,
D. B. WHITLOCK,
FREDERIC DE PEYSTER,
WILLIAM S. LANGFORD.

NEW YORK, September 27, 1872.

REPLY.

My Dear Bishop and Brethren of the Clergy and Laity: I have received, through the Rev. Dr. Haight, your request for the publication of the sermon preached at the opening of the late Convention of this Diocese. I feel deeply sensible of the honor conferred upon me by this departure from ordinary usage, and by the kind tribute which was paid to the sermon during the session of Convention.

This has been the more gratifying because it is an evidence that the questions which agitate our Church can be discussed without bitterness, and that views, which in times of excited controversy are sure to be misundertood, at other times are equally sure to receive a fair and generous hearing.

It is my object in the sermon to show that there are inherent tendencies in the Church to the development of three schools of opinion, and that while, in my view, one of these schools gives a far greater prominence than the others to the central truths of the Gospel, yet the mutual action and reaction of the three are essential to the activity and progress of the Church. As a necessary consequence of this view, it follows that the true method of restraining the undue development and exaggerations of any one school is not, except in the most extreme cases, by ecclesiastical repression, but by giving a larger development to the other and counterbalancing elements in the Church.

It is gratifying to me to remember that in a sermon preached, at an ordination, in 1859, and requested for publication by the clergy present, I endeavored to present the same idea. It contains the following language:

"No one will claim that the best results in Church or in State have been brought about by the success of the views of one or another party, but by the action and reaction of one upon the other. So that it is unquestionably a fact that better results have, on the whole, been attained by the combined action of these various parties, than if one, however pure, had directed and controlled the movement alone And that is simply to say that God is wiser than any or all of those whom he employs as his instruments in the world."

This view, it seems to me, and this alone, furnishes the key to the due restraining and harmonizing, of the antagonistic elements in the Church.

In the hope that through the favor which you have been pleased to accord to the sermon, it may help, in some degree, to promote that end, I cannot hesitate to furnish a copy for publication.

With great respect and affection, faithfully yours in the Church,

JOHN COTTON SMITH.

RECTORY, CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION,
October 5, 1872.

The Sermon on the Church's Mission of Reconciliation was preached before the Eastern Convocation of the Diocese of Massachusetts, and was requested for publication in the following letter:

To the Rev. John Cotton Smith, D.D.

Rev. and Dear Brother: By vote of the members of the Eastern Convocation of the Diocese of Massachusetts, the undersigned were appointed a committee to request the publication of the sermon you delivered before them to-day in the Church of the Ascension, Ipswich.

We listened with great pleasure to the expression of your views as to the mission of our Church in reconciling differences, and think the dissemination of such views would do much toward giving comfort to minds now disquieted by doubts and difficulties.

We regret that the time usually devoted to the delivery of a sermon did not permit you to develop one important point you indicated in outline—viz.: "Our Church's relationship to other bodies of Christians." We beg to suggest that such a topic is one of especial importance at this time, and that whatever will aid in bringing together the scattered members of Christ's flock will receive the serious consideration of many who now lament our unhappy divisions.

Thanking you for the pleasure and the instruction you have given us, and asking for our brethren the

opportunity to enjoy your sermon as we did, we remain

Very truly your friends,

GEORGE W. SHINN,
LOUIS DE CORMIS,
BRYAN B. KILLIKELLY.

IPSWICH, MASS., September 18, 1879.

REPLY.

To the Rev. Messrs. George W. Shinn, Louis De Cormis, Bryan B. Killikelly, Committee, etc.

REV. AND DEAR BRETHREN: It gives me pleasure to comply with the request of the Eastern Convocation of Massachusetts for the publication of my sermon on "The Church's Mission of Reconciliation."

Very sincerely yours,

JOHN COTTON SMITH.

NEW YORK, ASCENSION RECTORY,
October 1, 1879.

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